THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA:
SOME ASPECTS OF POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY

ABSTRACT

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IQBAL MOHIUDDIN

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ABSTRACT

of the Ph.D. Thesis on

THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA :

Some Aspects of Political Geography

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The thesis attempts to set forth the geographical facts which underlie the political situation obtaining in the India of today. Understandably this work has got involved in many social facts which in most cases have geographical under-pinnings. It was necessary to form a somewhat coherent picture even though the details of the picture may have been wearisome. It must be admitted, however, that the vastness of the country and the complexity of the problems do not lend themselves to simple generalizations.

The author has chosen to examine three factors which seem to have been the precepts accepted by the Union Government -- irrespective of whichever party may have been in power. These precepts are: (i) the adherence to the Gandhian principle of non-violence and a simplistic

economy; (ii) the establishment of a socialist society; and (iii) the enforcement of the supremacy of the central government in Union-State relationship.

The thesis contains nine chapters which are follows: (1) Historical Matrix, (2) Physical Setup, (3) India after 1947, (4) Economy, (5) Demographic Factors, Social Conflicts and Cleavages, (6) Centre-State Relationship, (7) Political Parties and Electoral Behaviour, (8) Unity and Disunity and (9) Conclusion.

The presentation does seem to be systematic but the approach is holistic and the basic theme is the investigation of the strong as well as the weak spots in the political geography of India, especially with reference to the three precepts which have been mentioned above.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The writer expresses his profound gratitude to his teacher, Professor Mohammad Anas, who has been very generous in giving his valueable time and helpful criticism and advice in the course of this work. He is also grateful to Professor Mohammad Shafi for providing him all possible facilities for work in the Department of Geography, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh.

ALIGARH,
January, 1983

(Iqbal Mohiuddin)

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INTRODUCTION

This work purports to deal with the political geography of India, and it is indeed a formidable task to cover all the internal, peripheral and external problems of the country in a work such as the present one. In order to bring this study within manageable limits the author has therefore chosen to examine three factors which seem to have been the precepts accepted by the Union Government -- irrespective of whichever party may have been in power. These precepts are: (i) the adherence to the Gandhian principle of non-violence and a simplistic economy; (ii) the establishment of a socialist society; and (iii) the enforcement of the supremacy of the central government in Union-State relationship. In presenting the political geography of India, we shall examine time and again the extent to which the three precepts mentioned above have been realized. However, before giving a systematic account of the political geography of the country we may fathom the bases of the precepts themselves.

The first basic precept is the Gandhian principle of non-violence (ahimsa) and the plea for a simplistic economy. Mahatma Gandhi had adopted ahimsa not only as an article of faith but also as a political weapon in the

Indian people's struggle for freedom. It did prove to be a successful weapon against the alien rule. In post-independence India, the Government of India, despite all its reverence for Gandhiji, found that the country's administration could not be run on the basis of ahimsa, and its application to the internal problems of the country was well neigh impossible. In external affairs, however, it was found to be most useful and even necessary. The principles of Panchsheel and the policy of non-alignment have a direct link with the Gandhian precept of non-violence. It is certainly the ordering principle in maintaining world peace.

As for Gandhian economics, that is to say "small is beautiful", it is obviously not workable in a country which very rightly has opted for modernization.

The second precept is the establishment of socialism. The Preamble of the Constitution of India ensures, amongst other things, social, economic and political justice as well as equality of status and of opportunity to the citizens. It means the creation of an egalitarian society. Now, an egalitarian society may take many forms. It was not until the passage of a few years that the ruling party, the Indian National Congress, resolved that India should have a "socialistic pattern of society". It took some more years to pronounce that the country should have "socialism". The

meaning of "socialism" all through these years has been that the "commanding heights of the economy" should be controlled by the government. Ever since independence uptil now the country has had a "mixed economy" for better or worse.

The third precept is the enforcement of the supremacy of central government in Union-State relationship. As a matter of fact, a strong centre has been a necessity throughout the historical period, for India is a vast country with great geographical diversities. Every ruler in the past tried to maintain his domain's unity through a strong administrative centre. What we have to examine is that in an independent India regional harmony and national unity could be possible without a strong centre.

* * *

The thesis contains nine chapters which are follows: (1) Historical Matrix, (2) Physical Setup, (3) India after 1947, (4) Economy, (5) Demographic Factors, Social Conflicts and Cleavages, (6) Centre-State Relationship, (7) Political Parties and Electoral Behaviour, (8) Unity and Disunity, and (9) Conclusion.

The presentation does seem to be systematic but the approach is holistic and the basic theme is the investigation of the strong as well as the weak spots in the political geography of India, especially with reference to the three precepts which we have discussed above.

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL MATRIX

In a land of vast dimensions, such as the sub-continent of India is, a strong centre has always been the need of its rulers. It is from this angle that we may examine the historical matrix of this land. The history of the sub-continent is a story of alternating periods of schism and union amongst the various parts of the territory. Geographically speaking, it is an account of a recurrent struggle, between the central part of the Indo-Gangetic Plain and the surrounding regions. The former, as the traditional political core of the sub-continent has perpetually sought to keep under its control over the adjacent and distant areas, which in their turn have often resisted the attempt and have generally asserted their independence whenever there has been an opportunity.

The Republic of India has inherited from the past many cultural, racial, linguistic, religious and politico-administrative legacies. To begin from a remote date, the Aryan invaders who pushed the Dravidians to the southern parts of the country brought with them a new culture. In course of time, they extended their territory as far as Bengal in east and Narmada in the south (Fig.1). Their

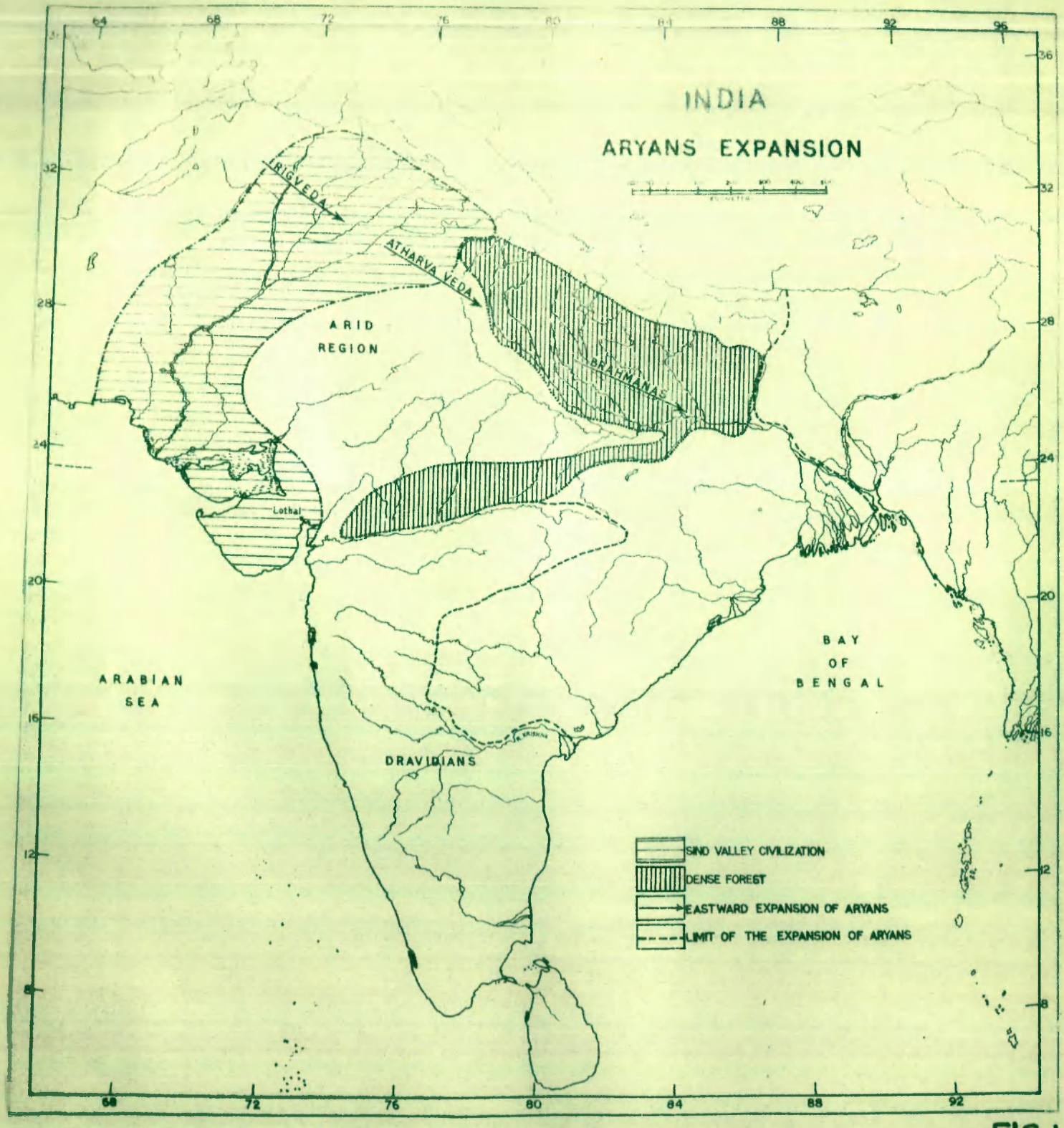
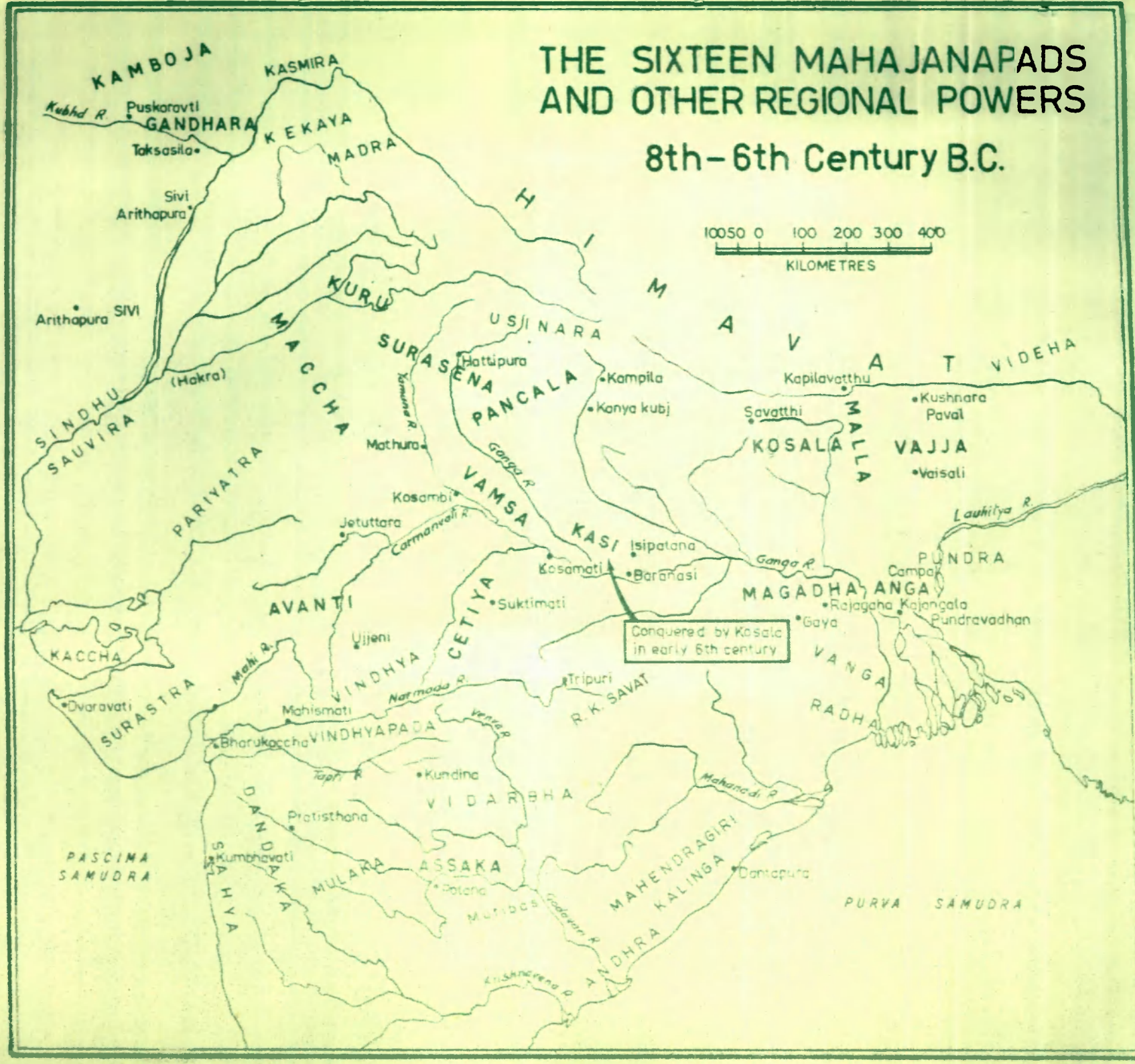

INDIA
ARYANS EXPANSION
RIGVEDA
ATHARVA VEDA
BRAHMANAS
ARID
REGION
Lothal
ARABIAN
SEA
BAY
OF
BENGAL
DRAVIDIANS
SIND VALLEY CIVILIZATION
DENSE FOREST
EASTWARD EXPANSION OF ARYANS
LIMIT OF THE EXPANSION OF ARYANS
64
68
72
76
80
84
88
92
96
36
32
28
24
20
16
12
8

FIG.1

expansion was restricted mainly by geographical factors such as the Thar desert on the south and southwest, the Sulaiman mountains on the west and the thick monsoon forests on the east. However, they were able to establish as many as sixteen mahajanapads (provinces) Fig.2.

The Aryans who came to India were a distinct racial group (Aryan--Caucasian), speaking Sanskrit and associated languages, possessing a highly developed culture and practising a kind of religion which, as expressed in the four Vedas and Puranas, still forms part of Indian religious thinking and philosophy. The class divisions which they introduced eventually became a rather rigid caste system.

From about 400 B.C., which marks the beginning and the recorded Indian history, to the present day, there have been about nine periods in which India was a big or small empire. Out of these, there were only four periods in which the empire exercised significant control over the distant areas. These were (i) the Maurya Empire, which reached its zenith under Ashoka in approximately 250 B.C.; (ii) the Tughluk Empire, which reached its climax under Muhammad Bin Tughlak A.D. 1335; (iii) the Mughal Empire, which was consolidated by Akbar (1605) and achieved its maximum extent under Aurangazeb in 1680 (Figs.3 and 4); (iv) the British Empire of the 19-20th century (Figs.5 and 6).


THE SIXTEEN MAHAJANAPADS
AND OTHER REGIONAL POWERS
8th–6th Century B.C.
100 50 0 100 200 300 400
KILOMETRES
KAMBOJA
KASMIRA
GANDHARA
Puskaravti
Kubhd R.
Taksasila
KEKAYA
MADRA
Sivi
Arithapura
Arithapura SIVI
KURU
MACCHA
SURASENA
USINARA
Hattipura
PANCALA
Kampila
Kanya kubj
Kapilavatthu
VIDEHA
Kushnara
Paval
Savatthi
KOSALA
MALLA
VAJJA
Vaisali
Mathura
Yamuna R.
Ganga R.
SINDHU SAUVIRA
(Hakra)
PARIYATRA
VAMSA
Kosambi
Jetuttara
Carmanvati R.
KASI
Isipatana
Kosamati
Barānasi
Lauhitya R.
PUNDRA
Campa
MAGADHA
ANGA
Rajagaha
Kajangala
Pundravadhan
Gaya
Conquered by Kosala in early 6th century
AVANTI
Suktimati
CETIYA
Ujjeni
KACCHA
Mahi R.
VINDHYA
Narmada R.
Tripuri
R. K. SAVAT
VANGA
RADHA
SURASTRA
Dvaravati
Mahismati
VINDHYAPADA
Bharukaccha
Venna R.
Tapti R.
Kundina
VIDARBHA
Mahanadi R.
Pratisthana
DANDAKA
SAHYA
Kumbhavati
MULAKA
ASSAKA
Potana
Mutibas
Godavari R.
MAHENDRAGIRI
KALINGA
Dantapura
ANDHRA
Krishnaveni R.
PASCIMA SAMUDRA
PURVA SAMUDRA


INDIA
ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS
OF AKBAR (1605)
THE UZBEK KHANATE
MERV
BALKH
BADAKHSHAN
KABUL
SWAD
KASHMIR
BANNU
LAHORE
GANDAHAR
MULTAN
DELHI
kymaun
AJMER
AGRA
AWADH
ASHAM
kech_
mukran
SIND
ALLAHABAD
BIHAR
BENGAL
Kuch_
Bihar
Tipara
cutch
MALWA
GUJARAT
Surguja
khokhra
TRACT
ORISSA
Daman
KHANDESH
BERAR
chanda
UNSUBJUGATED
INVASION IN
PROGRESS
AHMADNAGAR
Bastar
ARABIAN
SEA
GOLKONDA
BIJAPUR
BAY
OF
BENGAL
GOA
VIJAYANAGAR
(KARNATAK)
MALABAR
CEYLON

FIG. 3

A study of the rise and fall of each Empire indicates that although the circumstances of their respective origins and the degree of their political control were different, their decline and disintegration followed a surprisingly similar pattern. In each case it resulted in the eventual separation of the marginal areas from the central core.

With the establishment of kingdoms in Northern India by about 600 B.C., the details of Indian history began to emerge with greater clarity. In fact, the preceding centuries had been the age of tribal organizations. Permanent settlement in any particular area gave a geographical identity to a tribe or a group of tribes and subsequently this identity was given a concrete shape in the possession of the area, which was generally named after the tribe. For maintaining suzerainty over the area, it was necessary to evolve some kind of political authority which was generally in the form of a monarchy.

Now we may consider in chronological order the four important periods which we have mentioned above:

(1) THE MAURYA PERIOD

The Maurya Empire was founded by Chandra Gupta Maurya who took advantage of the chaos in northern India

following the departure of Alexander in 325 B.C. He captured the remains of the Greek domain in India and forged them into an empire. His grandson, Ashoka, enlarged this empire to include the better part of the sub-continent. Although, the exact boundaries of Ashoka's Empire are not known, Davies has traced the extent of his empire as determined by the geographical distribution of his rock and pillar edicts.[1]

After his victory in the Kalinga War (c.250 B.C.) Ashoka was able to establish a strong centre commanding a large domain. At the same time he accepted Budhism as his creed and adopted the principle of non-violence in human affairs including the conduct of his own administration. His religious convictions enjoined upon him to establish an egalitarian society which, in fact, was a revolt against the caste system and the Brahminic hold.

After Ashoka's death, when the Mauryan dynasty was replaced by the Sunga dynasty which was soon replaced by the more powerful Gupta dynasty -- the centre remaining strong all the time.

Political situation in India after the close of the Mauryan period became rather chaotic resulting into a weakening or even disappearance of a central authority.

Whereas the people of the peninsular India were seeking to define their personality, northern India found itself caught up in the turmoil of happenings in Central Asia.

Harsha, who replaced Gupta rule in the 7th century, temporarily annexed West Bengal, but was unabled to subdue Punjab and Sind, which along with Bengal enjoyed local rule for the next five centuries. In other words Bengal and Indus plains remained largely independent for almost 1500 years, i.e., from the death of Ashoka in 232 B.C. to the rise of Delhi Sultanate in A.D. 13th Century. At no time during this period did these two areas belong to the same empire.

The first Muslims arrived in India soon after the disruption of Harsha's Empire. An Arab, Mohammad Bin Qasim, first sent a punitive expedition against the pirates of the Makran coast, and subsequently occupied Sind in A.D. 712. However, the Arab rule in Sind was localized and brief and had little involvement with the rest of India.

Duringand after this period, India was generally characterized by internal strife. A three-cornered struggle for paramountcy waged by the Palas of Bengal, the Rashtrakutas of the Deccan, and the Gujars of the Ganga-Yamuna basin had weakened each of these powers. The western flank was

undefended and the entire Indus basin suffered from rivalries among its own petty states. Mahmud, a chief of Ghazni (Afghanistan), took advantage of this opportunity and descended on Punjab. His continual invasions between 1020 and 1030 paralysed the Indian rulers so much that they were unable to dislodge even his weak successors. A century and a half later, another Afghan, Mohammud Afghur crushed the rulers of Ghazni, invaded and occupied Punjab in 1186, defeated a confedaracy of Hindu rulers in 1092, captured Delhi and initiated the Delhi sultanates.

(2) THE TUGHLUK PERIOD

The Tughluks had inherited the bulk of the northern plains from their predecessors. It remained for Mohammad Bin Tughluk to extend his rule to the Deccan, and by 1335 his empire encompassed all but the southern tip of the sub-continent; it was slightly larger than Ashoka's Empire of 1500 years before. In this extensive empire, however, the internal stability was so little and the marginal areas so rebellious that the emperor had to resort to all kinds of expedients -- armed forces, police and spies -- to keep the colossus intact. He shifted his capital from the strategically located Delhi to the more centrally located Devanagari in the Deccan, only to move it back to Delhi when

he was faced with rebellions in Bengal and Punjab. None of these experiments proved successful.[2]

Mohammad and his successors were too weak to stop the process of disintegration heralded by the secession of Bengal. The next 50 years were truly a period of storm and stress in which the empire continued to dwindle in strength. The final blow came with the invasion of India by Timur the Lame in 1398.

A coup at Delhi enabled the Sayyid Family to gain temporary control of the capital and the little that was left of the empire. It was however, dispossessed by the rebellious and more powerful governor of Punjab, who captured the capital and established the Lodi dynasty in 1414. Similarly, in the east, the ruler of Bengal extended his control westwards into Bihar. During the next 100 years it were these two "out-lying" areas which between them ruled the bulk of the northern plains.

(3) THE MUGHAL PERIOD

Mughal period began in 17th century A.D. and lasted until the British conquests and annexations in India. During the 16th and 17th centuries the Mughal emperors unified North India and much of the Deccan.

The Mughal rulers did not lose sight of the necessity of a strong centre. Akbar (1556-1605) sought to strengthen his rule by befriending the Rajput rulers and aristocracy. He systematically organized his administration by dividing his domain into a number of Subas (provinces) and by laying down a revenue system which persisted not only throughout the Mughal period but was basically adopted even by the British Indian Government.

During the period of the last effective Mughal emperor, Aurangzeb (1657-1707), the territorial jurisdiction of the Mughal empire had extended to its maximum (Fig.4). He had subjugated two south Indian Shia Muslim States of Bijapur and Golkunda, which had acted as buffer States between the Marathas and the Mughals. As soon as those States were annexed to the Mughal empire, the Marathas had to be faced by Aurangzeb directly. He had to go to the south himself to fight the Marathas, leaving behind the central administration in weak hands. He remained in South India for twenty-five years but could not defeat the Marathas. His central administration in the meantime became too weak to control the empire. Thus, the country fell prey to political chaos. The vast Mughal empire began to disintegrate.

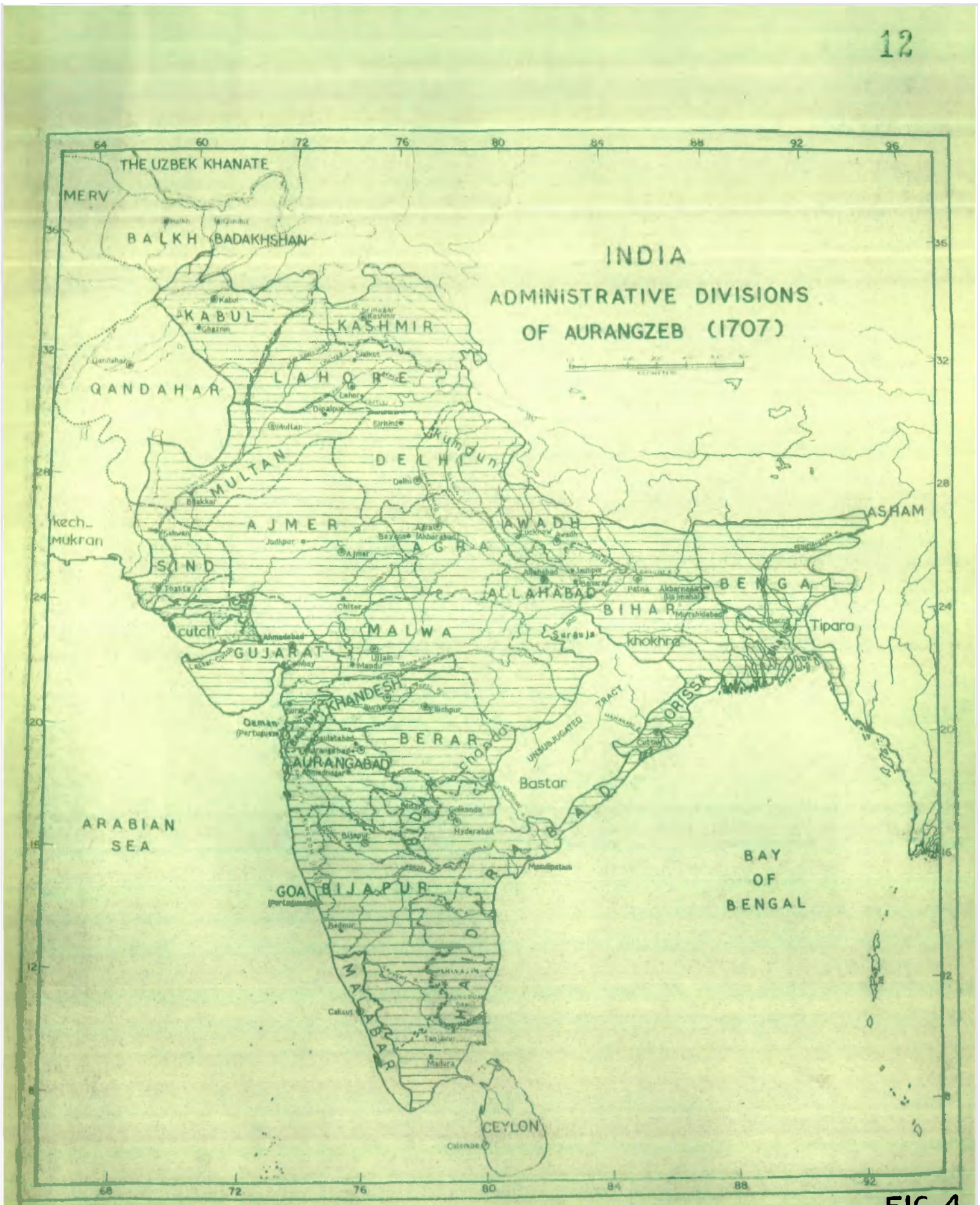

INDIA
ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS
OF AURANGZEB (1707)
THE UZBEK KHANATE
MERV
BALKH
BADAKHSHAN
KABUL
KASHMIR
QANDAHAR
LAHORE
MULTAN
DELHI
AJMER
AWADH
AGRA
ALLAHABAD
BIHAR
BENGAL
ASHAM
SIND
MALWA
GUJARAT
KHANDESH
BERAR
AURANGABAD
BIJAPUR
GOA
Bastar
Tipara
khokhra
Surguja
ORISSA
TRACT
UNSUBJUGATED
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BENGAL
CEYLON
Kabul
Ghazni
Kandahar
Lahore
Multan
Delhi
Agra
Ajmer
Jodhpur
Thatta
Cutch
Ahmadabad
Cambay
Surat
Burhanpur
Ellichpur
Daulatabad
Aurangabad
Ahmadnagar
Bijapur
Golkonda
Hyderabad
Masulipatam
Calicut
Tanjavur
Madura
Colombo
Patna
Dacca
Cuttak
Oman
(Portuguese)
(Portuguese)

FIG. 4

(4) THE BRITISH PERIOD

A new phase of Indian history started with the advent of the British (Fig.5). A disintegrated India was easy to conquer. After an initial phase of the rule of East India Company, the British followed a firm policy of centrality of administration. There were many princely States in India which were autonomous in their internal administrative matters, but were directly under the British control. These States were given the power to maintain internal unity and peace. This British policy was based on the realization that India was too big a country with great geographical diversities, and it was difficult to rule directly the entire country peacefully. Hence, for the convenience of administration it permitted the existence of numerous princely states.

* * *

The last phase of the history of India began in 1947. At the time the British left the country, the map of India, excluding the area of Pakistan, was divided into 9 British Provinces and 562 Indian States (Fig.6). In general, it may be said that the British policy in India encouraged regional rivalry, economic inefficiency, extravagant expenditure by the princes, and general

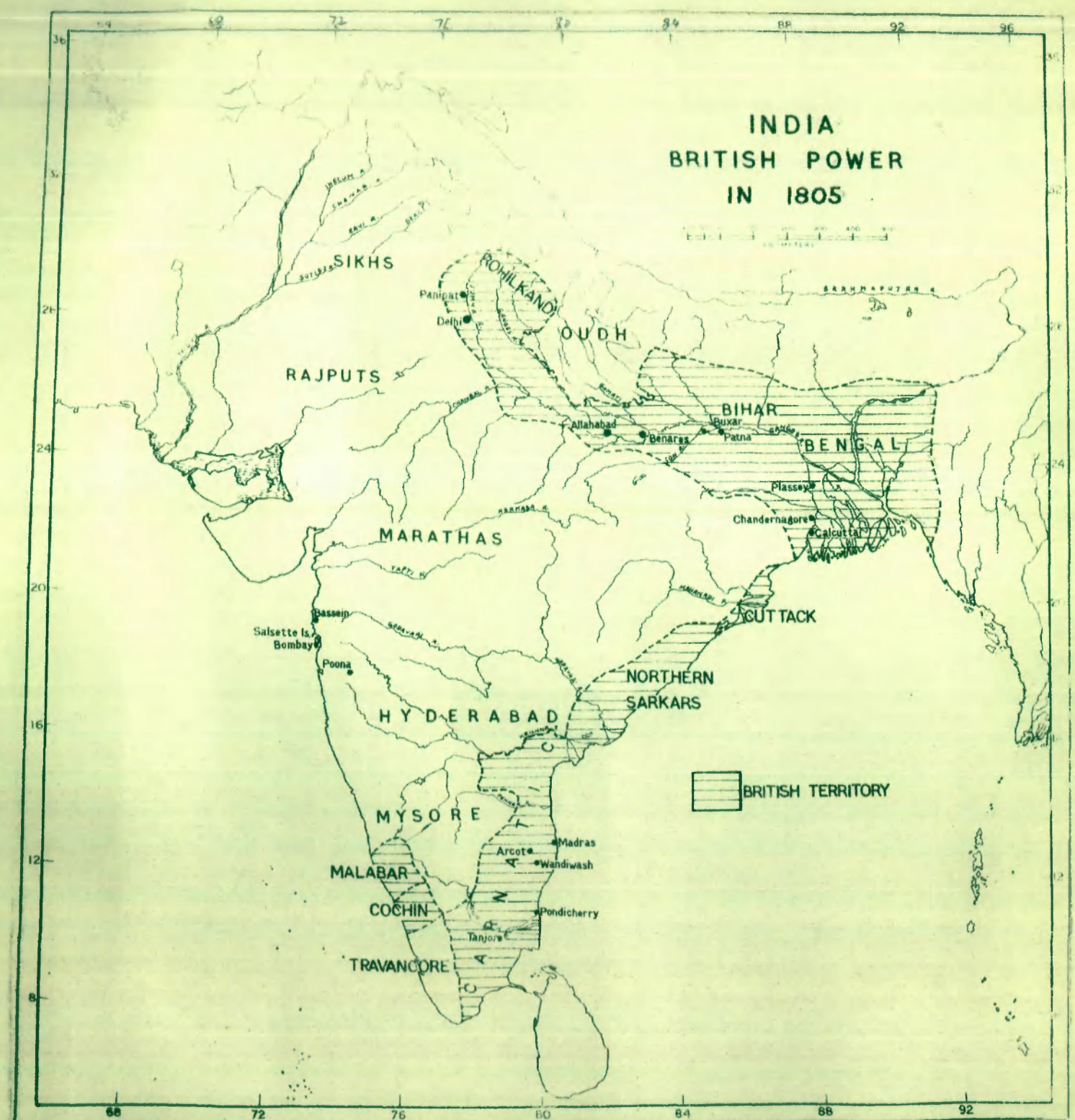

INDIA
BRITISH POWER
IN 1805
SIKHS
ROHILKAND
Panipat
Delhi
OUDH
RAJPUTS
BIHAR
Allahabad
Buxar
Benares
Patna
BENGAL
Plassey
Chandernagore
Calcutta
MARATHAS
CUTTACK
Bassein
Salsette Is.
Bombay
Poona
NORTHERN
SARKARS
HYDERABAD
BRITISH TERRITORY
MYSORE
Madras
Arcot
Wandiwash
MALABAR
COCHIN
Pondicherry
Tanjore
TRAVANCORE
68
72
76
80
84
88
92

FIG. 5


INDIA AT THE END OF BRITISH RAJ (1947)
KASHMIR
AFGHANISTAN
Peshawar
PUNJAB
Lahore
Quetta
Simla
TIBET
Multan
Patiala
Bahawalpur
Rampur
BALUCHISTAN
Delhi
UNITED PROVINCES
NEPAL
Bikaner
RAJPUTANA
Jaipur
Agra
Lucknow
Sikkim
Darjeeling
ASSAM
Ajmer
Karauli
Jodhpur
Gwalior
Shillong
SIND
Karachi
Udaipur
Allahabad
Benares
Patna
BIHAR
Manipur
Tippera
CENTRAL INDIA
BENGAL
Chandernagore (Fr.)
Calcutta
Chittagong
Indore
Bhopal
Baroda
CENTRAL PROVINCES
Surat
Nagpur
BERAR
Diu Is. (Port)
SONPUR
ORISSA
BOMBAY
BASTAR
Bombay
Poona
HYDERABAD
Kolhapur
Hyderabad
Yanaon (Fr.)
BAY OF BENGAL
ARABIAN SEA
GOA (Port)
MYSORE
Madras
Mangalore
Bangalore
Pondicherry (Fr.)
Mahe (Fr.)
Mysore
Calicut
Karikal (Fr.)
COCHIN
TRAVANCORE
CEYLON
Colombo
Kandy
PRINCELY STATES
BRITISH INDIA

FIG. 6

negligence of the masses by the rulers. Not infrequently, it was a policy of divide and rule, which eventually led to the division of eventually the country into two separate states of India and Pakistan.

The birth and growth of a free Republic of India has not altogether eradicated the centrifugal tendencies. Although in times of crisis the state has stood as one and acted as one, the peripheral areas still present problems. Kashmir, the northeastern hill states, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, and most recently Punjab are some of the peripheral areas which contain problems of tension with the centre. These problems take various shapes and forms and vary in their intensity. These are a challenge to the statesmen of the country.

The prime need after the partitioning of the country was, and still is, to maintain a strong centre both in order to waive off external threat and to prevent a climate of strife within the country.

It appears that in recent years regional and parochial tendencies in the country have been on the increase and the need for a strong centre is as great as ever. This strength, however, shall have to be used with

wisdom and care. India, it seems, is still in the nation-building stage and as history all over the world bears out nation-building is no easy task and involves both good education and strong persuasion. It is gratifying that the government is alive to the task.

REFERENCES

1. Davies, C.C., An Historical Atlas of the Indian Peninsula, p.12.
Davies shows these monuments on a map, but ignores his own advice and does not use them to delineate Ashoka's empire. According to the Cambridge History of India, 'it would be a mistake to assume that even Ashoka, the most powerful of the Mauryas, maintained full political control over an empire so vast in extent'.

2. Majumdar, R., An Advanced History of India, pp.317-26 also, Smith, V.A., The Oxford History of India, pp.237-44.

CHAPTER II

PHYSICAL SETUP

The physiography of a state has a definite influence in the shaping of its political geography. The physical barriers often prove to be political and cultural divides. The historical role of the Himalayas is well known and may be cited as a singular example. Similarly, almost throughout history the ranges of central India -- Vindhyas, Satpura and Satmala -- have acted as significant barriers between northern India and southern India. It is commonplace that physical barriers place hindrances in centrality of administration.

Another aspect of physiography which should be reckoned with in the political geography of a state is the diversity of regions. A central government is inevitably obliged to bring the diverse regions in unison. Whenever the central authority is weakend, the peripheral or the relatively inaccessible areas tend to ignore or defy the central government.

Regional diversities result in imbalances in economic development which naturally lead to internal political problems. Regions which are more densely populated either for historical or for economic reasons may often have a better say in the national affairs.

It is in the light of the above mentioned considerations -- especially topographic barriers and physiographic diversity -- that we shall consider the physical setup of India.

The physiographic barriers within a state often place hindrances in the centrality of administration. It is well known that historically the Himalayas have been a political and cultural barrier. Similarly, the Vindhyans, Satpura and Satmala ranges in central India have been a kind of political and cultural barrier. The shatter belt between the northern plain and the Deccan Plateau also created physical obstacles in the migration of people. The States of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Maharashtra have distinctly different regional languages and cultures. Generally speaking, Hindi is the mother tongue in northern but in the south there are a number of regional languages.

We may now examine the physical set up and its implications in some detail.

* * *

Physiographically India is divided into four well-defined major divisions. These are (i) the Himalayas,

(ii) the Great Plain of Northern India, (iii) the Southern Peninsula, and (iv) the Costal Plains (Fig.7). Each of these divisions has a direct or indirect bearing on the political setting in the country. We shall examine each of these in the following pages.

(1) THE HIMALAYAS

The geographical feature which dominates the country is the Himalayas. There is no other mountain system anywhere in the world which has contributed so much to the shaping of the life of a country. Not only the political life of the people of India but also their religion, mythology, art and literature bear the imprint of this great mountain barrier. To the Hindus the Himalayas have been a perpetual source of wonder and veneration. The Himalayas symbolise India not only to the inhabitants of the Ganga valley but also to the dwellers of the Great Indian Desert, and no less to the people of south, a thousand and five hundred km. away, and to the men of the distant sea coast. The majesty of the snow-clad peaks, the inaccessibility of even the lesser ranges, the mystries of the gigantic glaciers and the magnificence of the great rivers that emerge from its gorges have combined to give to the Himalayas a greatness which no other mountain system

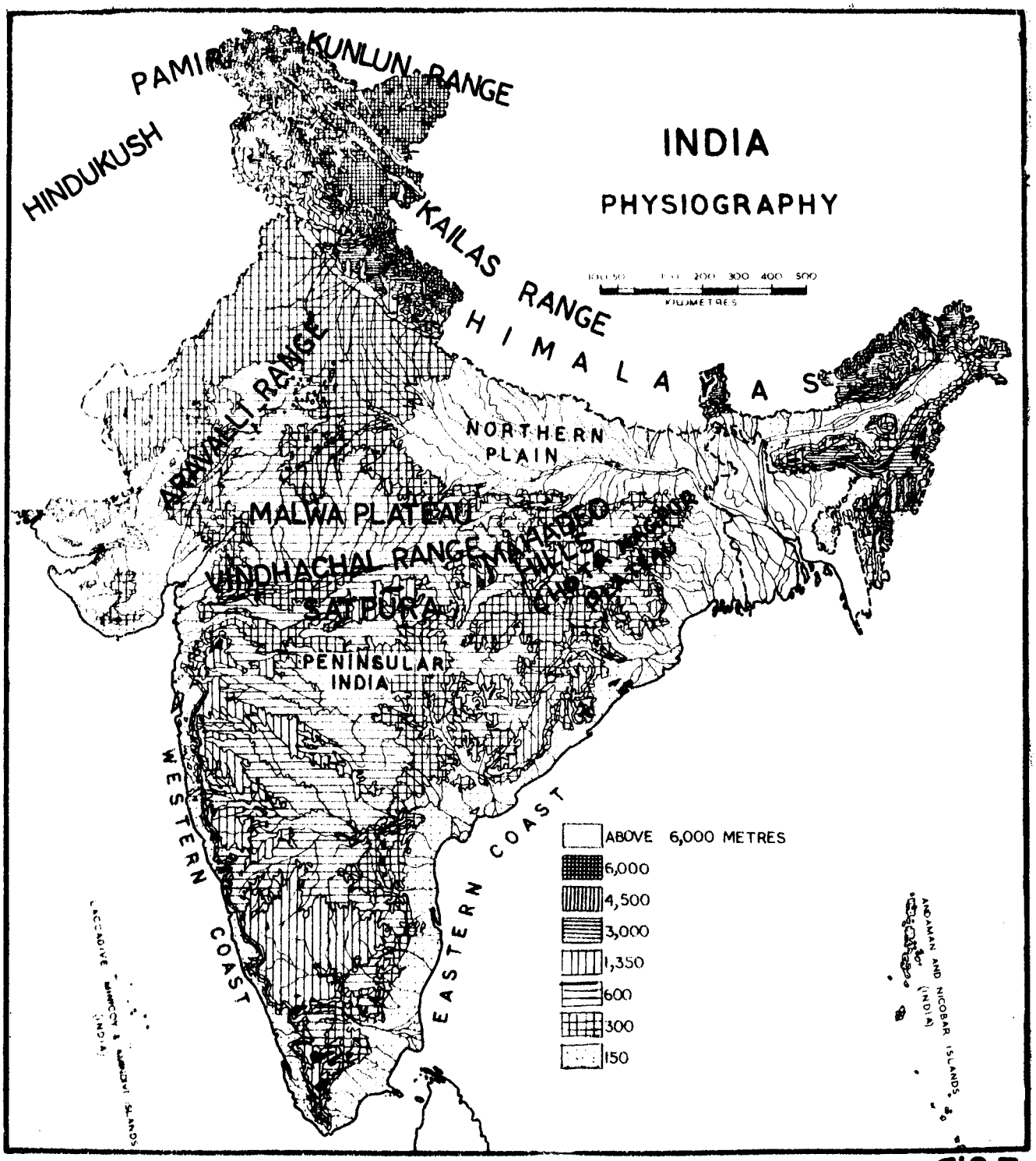

INDIA
PHYSIOGRAPHY
PAMIR
KUNLUN RANGE
HINDUKUSH
KAILAS RANGE
HIMALAYAS
ARAVALLI RANGE
NORTHERN PLAIN
MALWA PLATEAU
VINDHACHAL RANGE
SATPURA
PENINSULAR INDIA
WESTERN COAST
EASTERN COAST
ABOVE 6,000 METRES
6,000
4,500
3,000
1,350
600
300
150
ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS (INDIA)

FIG.7

can claim. No wonder that the Hindus have invested it with an element of divinity. The shrines and temples in the Himalayas attract Hindus from all corners of India. Religious places such as Rudra Prayag, Deo Prayag, Badrinath, Amarnath, Rishikesh, Hardwar and Lakshaman Jhula are visited by millions of Hindus every year.

The Himalayas are the world's highest mountain system, their longest range extending almost uninterruptedly for a distance of 2,500 km. There are three more or less parallel sections: (a) the Greater Himalayas, often known as the Inner Himalayas; (b) the Lesser Himalayas, also called the Middle Himalayas; and (c) the Outer Himalayas.

The Greater Himalayas extend as Zanskar Range in the northwest and then continue eastward upto the Brahmputra gorge. The Lesser Himalayas, which rise to no less than 5,000 meters, have an average width of 80 to 100 km. The Outher Himalayas with an average width of 15 to 50 km. has an elevation of 900 to 1,300 meters.

In the east, the mountain wall between India and Burma is called by different names at different places.

For centuries, the Himalayas with their difficult terrain and generally impassable ranges were generally a defence against the invaders from the north. They isolated

and insulated India from its land neighbours to the extent that the continent, in the words of Panikkar, "became introspective in its attitude".[1]

This generalization must however be qualified and we cannot do better than quote a paragraph from Spate:

> On the whole, .. India is clearly marked off from the rest of Asia by a broad no-man's - land of mountains, whether jungle-clad, ice-bound, or desert; though obviously among the mountain dwellers themselves no hard and fast line can be drawn dividing those solely or mainly Indian in history and cultural affinity from those solely Burmese, Tibetan, Afghan, or Iranian. The critical area is the northwestern hill, and here we find the past great empires slung across the mountains like saddle-bags, with bases of power on the plateau at Kabul or Ghazni or Kandhar, and also in the Punjab plains.[2]

The conquest of the lower regions of the Himalayas and the exploration of the great range itself must have been acts of high adventure in the dawn of Indian history. Flourishing kingdoms were established in Kashmir and Nepal both valleys ensconced in the Himalayas. There are references in the Hindu scriptures to the kingdoms of Dwigarta, Trigarta and Madra in the sub-Himalayan region. We may thus presume that the Hindu conquest of the Himalayas

took place mainly in the period between the Mahabharata and the Ramayana. Gradually, the entire range of the Himalayas, where human habitation was possible, became dotted with holy places.

In the pre-British and even during the British period, the Himalayan regions were generally economically backward and politically fragmented. The reorganization of States following the independence of India has changed all this. As for example, the princely hill states of the Simla region together with some areas of what was formerly British India have been constituted into a State known as Himachal Pradesh. The northeastern hill region of India has been similarly reorganized. Much has already been done and yet a great deal remains to be done. With the provision of roads, many areas which are now inaccessible may be connected with the plains to bring about economic development and prosperity. Natural water resources may be surveyed and harnessed. The extreme cold which in primitive time made human habitation of these altitudes difficult can be overcome. There is no reason why the spirit that colonised these areas in the earlier ages should not now receive a new impetus.

No other feature has had a greater significance on the evolution of Indian history than the Himalayas. It had in the past cut off India from its continental affiliations. To the Hindus the world ended at the Himalayas. What lay beyond was the region of unexplored mystery. The great Chinese Empire including Tibet was cut off from India for all practical purposes of travel and commerce. However, as stated earlier, the Himalayas have not proved a complete barrier to outside invasion in the past. Today in this age of jets and missiles, they are less so. What are the other factors which effect the traditional importance of the Himalayan ramparts?

The whole strategic concept of barriers has undergone revolutionary changes with the growth of air missile power. In fact, we shall not gain a proper perspective in respect of defence unless our geographical values are re-interpreted in terms of the new power in the modern age. A land mass protected by natural barriers can be approached from any side by planes and rockets.

How is the position of the Himalayas affected by this changed concept? If the purely geographical definition of the Himalayan range as having a width of only 240 km. is taken, that is to say, if it were possible to isolate

the range and forget the plateau to the north of the Himalayas, inspite of its immense height cannot be taken as an effective barrier. However, the point is not the width of 240 km. but the plateau behind it, which itself has an elevation of about 5,000 meters above mean sea level and is guarded on all the four sides by high mountains. In fact the vast barren upland behind the Himalayas provides India with the most magnificent defence in depth. No centre of dynamic power can be created anywhere near the ranges. The climatic conditions above the plateau are most unsuited and unfavourable for air operations and the distance involved from any reasonable point whence a continuous attack can be delivered on India from the Himalayan side is also an important factor. In short the Himalayas may still be considered a major system of defence for India, impregnable in the case of large-scale invasions and better than any man-made scheme of defence for such a long frontier. But no mountain range is ever a perfect barrier against every kind of invasion. While it separates nations and prevents normal commerce and intercourse between peoples, it has never been an insuperable obstacle against penetration by a determined enemy who has the resources of a powerfully organised state behind him. The Himalayan ranges though a formidable barrier may be overcome by enemy forces at

different places. If, until the Chinese invasion, it was not penetrated for an assault on the Indian plains, it was not because of lack of passes opening out onto India, but because the Tibetan plateau was never in the past organised as a great military state or base.

The fact that in the past a strong military base in Tibet did not exist should not blind us to such possibilities in the future. The Himalayan boundary will no longer be the dead boundary that it used to be.

The Himalayas have undoubtedly become a major object of political and economic interest. The study of Himalayan geography, geology, flora, fauna and its climatological phenomena and a hundred other matters connected with its life have now become most urgent for all students interested in the welfare of India.

(2) THE GREAT PLAIN OF NORTHERN INDIA

The northern Indian plain, situated to the south of the new folded mountain belt, is part of a great depression which is traceable across northern Africa, southern Europe and southern Asia.[3] It is an alluvium region of 4,800,000 sq. km. in area. The plain occupies the greater part of northern India and covers more than 2,400 km. from east to west with a width of 320 km. This

plain is formed by the basins of the Ganga, the Indus and the Brahmputra with their tributaries and has been the cradle of Indo-Aryan civilization from the earliest times. The geographical advantages obtaining in this plain are fertile soil, favourable climate, mineral resources and a level surface facilitating the construction of roads, railways and canals for irrigation and navigation. In the Ganga plain rainfall is heavy and agriculture is the chief occupation of the people. It contains more than 40 per cent of the total population of India. The western plain beyond the Ganga is more or less dry. Mention may be made of the Thar desert of India which covers an area of 211,200 sq. km. in Rajasthan.

Topographically the Indo-Gangetic plain is a vast alluvial monotony, relieved only by the flood plains sunk between steep and often intricately gullied bluffs, though significant variations are also introduced by the relative depths of the water-table, particularly in the long strips of gravelly talus and marshy tarai jungle bordering the Siwalik Hills, the low outermost vallum of the Himalayas.[4] But essentially the broad regional differences are climatic: distance from the sea and the position in relation to the Bay of Bengal branch of the wet summer monsoon are the main determinants of rainfall and so of crops, settlements and so on.

The great plain of India with its deep, fertile, stoneless alluvial soils, and its main rivers, is the most favourable and desirable part of this sub-continent.[5] The five states of the plain namely Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal in which about 40 per cent of the country's population lives, support one of the densest population in the world. These plains have a population considerably greater than that of the whole nation, and packed into an area "one tenth as large".[6] The plain supports, primarily an out-dated agricultural way of life, and average density comparable to that of naturalised Britain. Several important cities, however are located in the plain. Over-all, the high concentration of population present different political and economic problems, such as naxalite activities in Bihar and Bengal and acute unemployment resulting in large scale migrations.

The northern plain has remained throughout history the centre of Indian political power, and the capital of the country has always been constituted in the plain. Delhi and places in Rajasthan have at various times served as the political capital.

The northern plain has been a coveted region by several invaders, with the result it became the great

melting pot of cultures. It is on this northern plain that the whole modern drama of race conflict versus race assimilation was staged - a drama which finally saved the political and cultural density of both India and Pakistan. The traditional role of the northern plain has been in the concentration of political power. But with the advent of industrial concentrations in the peninsula, it is possible that this industrialization may change not only the distributional pattern of economic activities but also the locus of political power.

The people of the northern plain have always favoured the political unification of the country. During its history the northern plain by nature of its terrain has been more easily brought under one empire as compared to Indian Peninsula. Because of its flat nature it was easy to develop transportation specially roads, to organize armies, to excercise control from the capital (which was always constituted in the heart of the plain), and to attain steady crop production to support both the armies and the masses. It appears that even after Independence, the northern plains have had a greater share in the political leadership of the country.

(3) THE SOUTHERN PENINSULA

In the north the Aravalli hills and Vindhyas make boundary with a variety of terrain. The Western Ghats in the west and low Eastern Ghats in the east with many plateaus interspersed by rivers in between make the physiography a complex one.[7]

The peninsula is geologically a great complex of very ancient gneisses and granites, which form the surface over more than half its area. The complexity of rocks with intense metamorphism has given birth to important minerals like iron, manganese, mica, gold, lead and zinc. Peninsular India, therefore, is the custodian of these minerals and provides raw materials to heavy industry such as Iron-steel and cement.

It contains almost all the mineralised areas of the country. In the northeast portion of the plateau, the states of Bihar, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh, are the most important producers of iron, mica and manganese. In Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, iron, manganese, diamond, thorium and gold are mined. In the northwest, in Rajasthan, and in the centre, in Madhya Pradesh lead, zinc, uranium and mica are produced. Most of India's coal supply occurs in Bihar and West Bengal, both in the

plateau region. These mineral areas are now mostly the sites of extensive industry and have helped the process of urbanisation and capital accumulation. These industrial areas are the politically sensitive and unstable areas on account of labour unrest.

Another important political implication of the peninsula is that this region is an agriculturally rich area, specially for commercial crops. The fertile black lava soil region extends from the Aravalli Hills in the north to the Belgaum district in the south, and covers large parts of Kutch, Kathiawar, Bombay, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan. The black soil region produces important commercial crops like cotton, oil-seeds, tobacco, and sugarcane. Long staple cotton is the monopoly of this region. Low lying plains of the peninsula are important for growing rice. The fertile black soil region corresponds roughly with the Marathi speaking regions. Belgaum became a bone of contension in a border dispute between Maharashtra and Karnataka, because the Belgaum district is the only black cotton soil area in Karnataka and, at the same time, is linguistically akin to Maharashtra.

(4) COASTAL PLAINS

Coastal plains of India may be divided into east coastal plains and west coastal plains. The east coastal

plains cover about 102,882 sq. km., with about 35 million people. In the extreme northeast the coastal plains of Bengal and Orissa are fairly wide, while southwards the coastal plain is bounded by the discontinuous line of hills forming the Eastern Ghats, more precisely by the contours of 75 metres in Orissa, 100 metres in Andhara Pradesh and 150 metres in Tamil Nadu. Politically the northeastern coastal plains and their southern elongation includes parts of four states, namely, West Bengal, Orissa, Andhara Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. These extensive coastal plains are formed by the alluvial fillings of the littoral zone comprising some of the largest deltas. Along with the Ganga delta, these plains have served as active sea-boards not only for the major political units within which they are situated but also for most of the country since ancient times. The people of these coastal plains have vigorously participated in coastal as well as overseas trade particularly with Southeast Asian Realm and have succeeded in putting the stamp of Indian culture on far off lands.[8]

Between the Western Ghats and the Arabian Sea is the western coastal plain region. The region, 1,400 km. long and 18-80 km. broad, has an area of 64,284 sq. km.[9] The coastal lowland falls into 3 regions: the Konkan, the Karnataka or Kanara and the Kerala or Malabar. In the

north, the region emerges almost unperceptively into much wider Gujarat plain, while the eastern limit is approximately marked by 150 m. contour. Included in these regions are the coastal lowlands of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala and Kanya Kumari district of Tamil Nadu; the languages spoken on the respective parts are Marathi, Kanarese, Malayalam and Tamil.[10]

The western coastal plain is composed of fertile alluvial soil which supports a flourishing agriculture. In the northern part, the Gujarat coast contains the important industrial and textile industries of Ahmedabad and Bombay, as well as the coastal developed oil-producing areas of Ankleshwar, Gujarat. The Kanara-Konkan coast contains rich agricultural land and the important iron-ore producing area of Goa.

The Malabar coast is the most densely populated area in India. It is noted for cashew, coffee, coir, spices, tea and rubber production.

CLIMATE

The statement that life in the Indian sub-continent is dominated by the monsoons is a truism. Generally speaking, this climate has a cool dry season of northerly winds (the northeast monsoon from December to February)

giving way to a hot dry season (from March to early June) and then a hot wet season (the southwest monsoon)[11] (Fig.8).

The greatest climatic problem is the spatial and temporal variability of rainfall. Floods and droughts, crop failures, disputes regarding distribution of water, placement of dam sites, and preservation of forests are some of the problems which are directly related to the climatic conditions. Nowhere else are so many people so intimately dependent upon rainfall rhythm; the whole prosperity of India is tide-up with the accentricities of its seasonal winds![12]

The country receives nearly 90 per cent of its rain during the south-west monsoon season which is concentrated in a period of only four to six months. The winter monsoon is generally dry. Most importantly, the incidence of rainfall shows great variability (Fig.8).

The amount and incidence of rainfall strongly influences the cropping pattern. Thus one can clearly discern, for example, a rice and jute economy in West Bengal; a rice and sugarcane economy in the middle Ganga Plains; a wheat economy in western Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana; a millet economy in Rajasthan; and so on. Kerala,

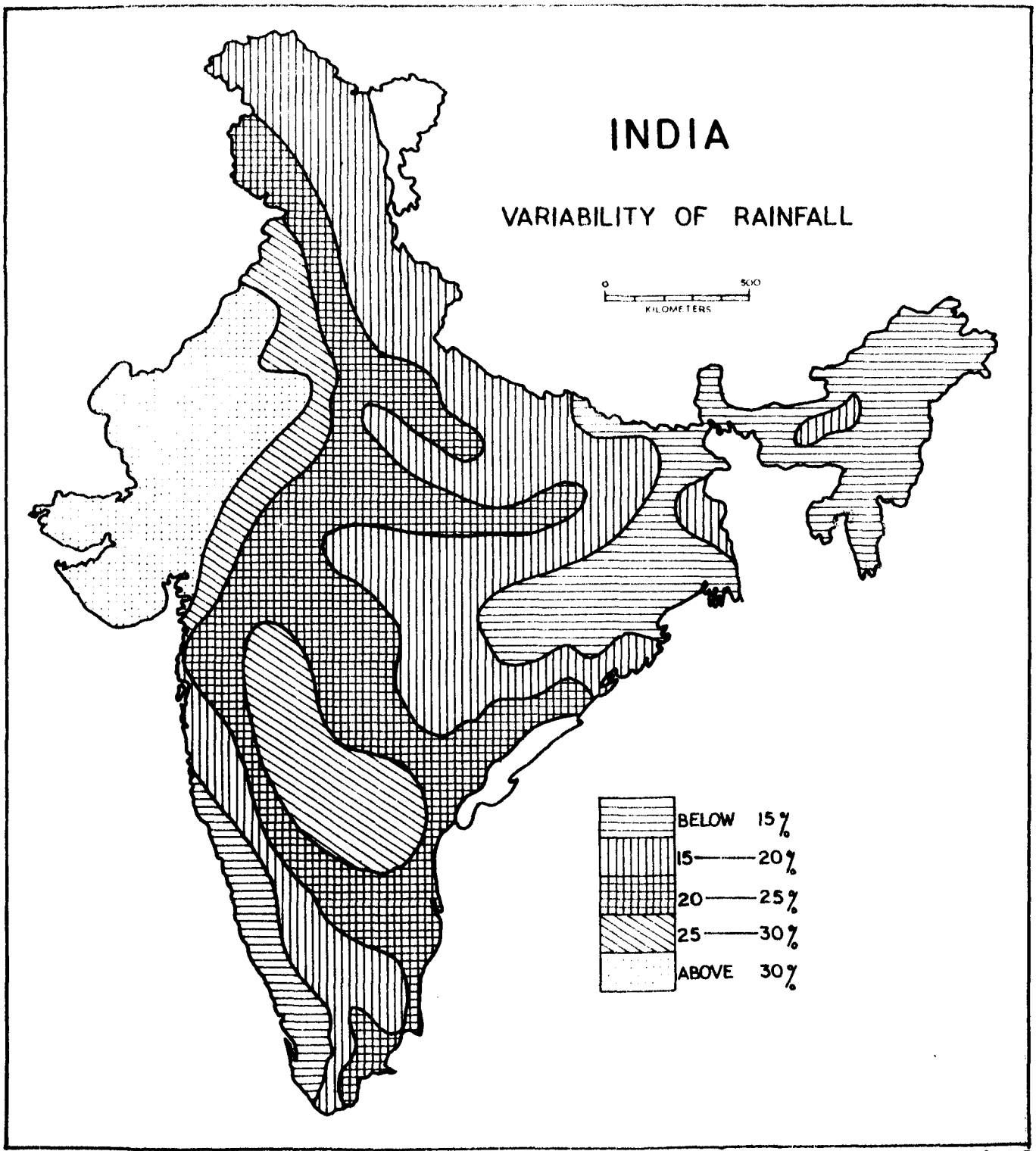

INDIA
VARIABILITY OF RAINFALL
0
500
KILOMETERS
BELOW 15%
15——20%
20——25%
25——30%
ABOVE 30%

FIG.8

Bihar and West Bengal are food deficit states due to climatic uncertainties. The political instability of some of these areas, especially Kerala and West Bengal, is partly caused by food deficits.

Rainfall is an important factor in the shaping of the political problems of India, since as it affects natural vegetation, agriculture, irrigation and settlement patterns. Areas with 80 inches or more rainfall produce good crops such as rice, tea, jute, coffee, rubber and spices. While floods are common, seasonal and local droughts are the major problems. The principle famine zone of India does not lie in the driest parts of the country but is situated in the zone of intermediate rainfall.[13] Famines create political unrest and play a great strain on the relief capabilities of the state.

SOIL

The soils of India show great variations in terms of chemical composition, texture, structure, and plant food contents.[14] They differ in their capacity to produce crops.

The various types of soils which are found in India (Fig.9) have been influenced in their formation by the great diversity in parent rock, climate and natural vegetation.

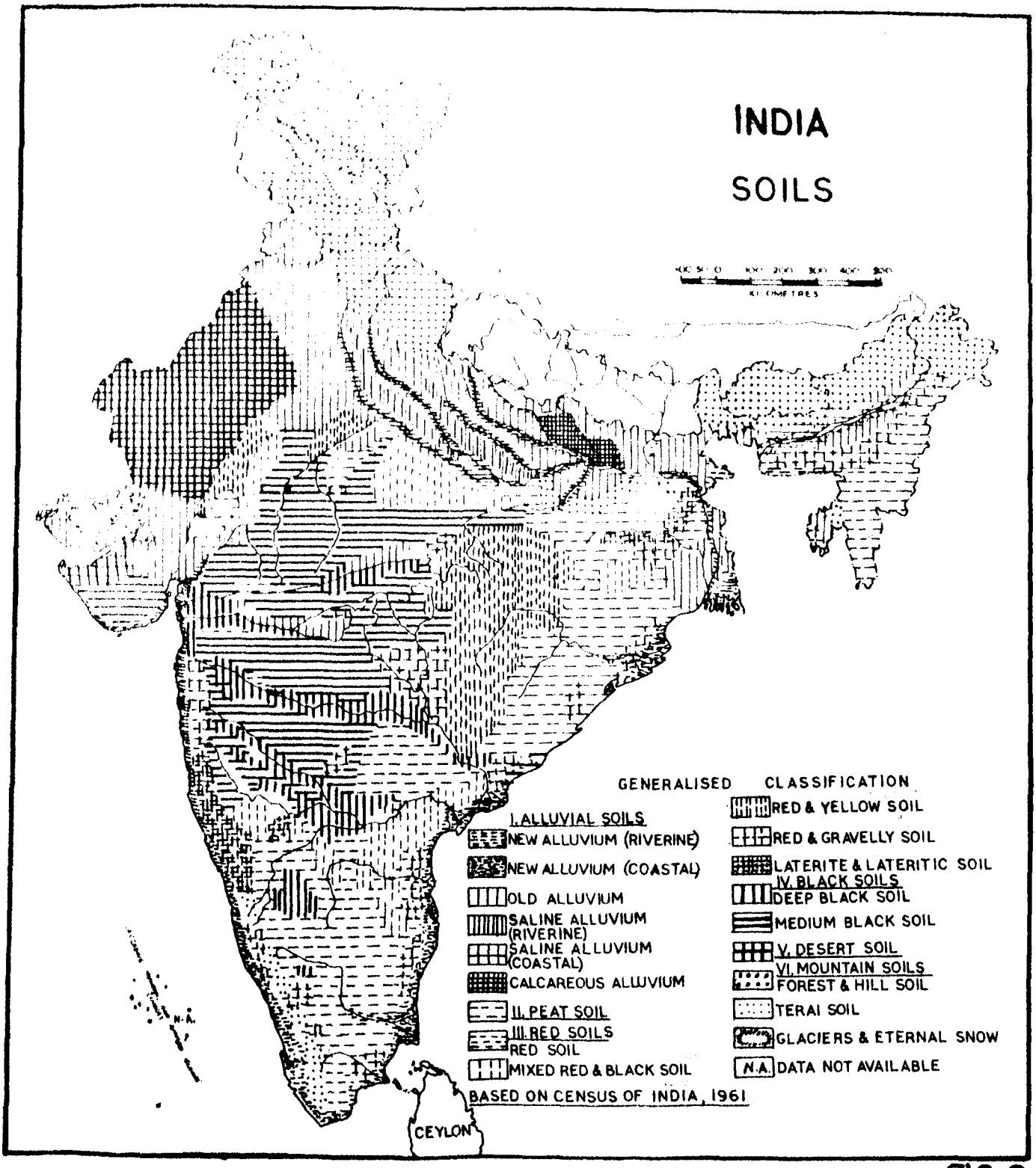

INDIA
SOILS
KILOMETRES
GENERALISED CLASSIFICATION
I. ALLUVIAL SOILS
NEW ALLUVIUM (RIVERINE)
NEW ALLUVIUM (COASTAL)
OLD ALLUVIUM
SALINE ALLUVIUM (RIVERINE)
SALINE ALLUVIUM (COASTAL)
CALCAREOUS ALLUVIUM
II. PEAT SOIL
III. RED SOILS
RED SOIL
MIXED RED & BLACK SOIL
RED & YELLOW SOIL
RED & GRAVELLY SOIL
LATERITE & LATERITIC SOIL
IV. BLACK SOILS
DEEP BLACK SOIL
MEDIUM BLACK SOIL
V. DESERT SOIL
VI. MOUNTAIN SOILS
FOREST & HILL SOIL
TERAI SOIL
GLACIERS & ETERNAL SNOW
N.A. DATA NOT AVAILABLE
BASED ON CENSUS OF INDIA, 1961
CEYLON
N.A.

FIG.9

Generally speaking, the most important and productive soil of India is the alluvial of the Sutlej-Ganga plain and delta regions of the southern rivers. These fertile soils give a high yield of crops, which may mean greater political stability.

The fertility of the soils of India has been generally depleated by continuous use. The need of fertilisers is great. Incidently, it may be mentioned that the location of a fertiliser plant sometimes causes conflict and political tension. Every state wants to have its own fertiliser plant, which is not economically feasible.

Agriculturally the most important soils are the alluvial formations. These soils are rich in chemical properties and are capable of yielding a large variety of rabi and kharif crops. The alluvial soils of the Ganga valley are dry, porous and in some places sandy, yielding crops are that do not need the retention of much moisture about their routes. At present in these areas cultivation has much developed with the help of irrigation. The alluvial tracts of West Bengal are more compact less coarse and more moisture than elsewhere and yield rice, jute, sugar, tobacco, etc. rather plentifully. The black soil comprised the greater part of Maharashtra, Gujarat, the western part of Madhya Pradesh and south of Uttar Pradesh,

south-east of Bihar, northwest of Orissa and the western part of Andhra Pradesh. The soils of these regions vary in different parts in character with productiveness. The soils are poor, thin and porous on the slopes and upland of the Deccan hills where millets and pulses are the main crops. Arid soils comprise the whole of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and southeastern Maharashtra and extend through the east of Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, to Orissa. Laterite soil is found in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Assam, West Bengal, Orissa and along the western and eastern ghats.[15]

NATURAL VEGETATION

The natural vegetation of India, except on the higher mountains and in the more arid parts, is essentially arboreal. Many of the best and least degenerated forests are in the largely inaccessible Himalayan areas, there is very little forest of any sort in the Indo-Gangetic plains, and much of the forest area of the Peninsula is really only a scrub-jungle, very open or stunted.

Shifting cultivation is practised in hilly areas of Assam, in Chhota Nagpur Plateau and in other tribal areas. Legislation to stop shifting cultivation often meets

opposition. The importance of forest for grazing, fuel and minor or major produce cannot be over-emphasised. Thus, forests are politically quite important.

* * *

In summing up, it may be restated that all the elements of the physical set up of the country contribute to the differentiation of physical environment which in turn creates a mosaic of cultural and social life. While the diversities of socio-economic life make for a richness of Indian culture the same cannot be said for politics and administration. The problem of regional imbalances presents a challenge to administrative centrality which, if it is to be effectuated and perpetuated, needs wisdom and strength and restraint. Moreover, these imbalances call for a just social order, which in the Indian context means socialism.

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CHAPTER III

INDIA AFTER 1947

Following the attainment of Independence by India in August 1947, and especially since the beginning of 1948, far reaching changes took place in the internal administrative structure of the Indian Union by the integration of those princely states which were contiguous to, or within India, and had acceded to her (Fig.10).

The integration and consolidation of the princely states, and frequent re-organization of the political map of the country, have inevitably resulted in bringing together regions of diverse politico-historical, socio-economic and cultural background into separate units of the federation.

Although the British dominated the whole of Indian empire, they gave autonomous status to the princely states which proved to be disintegrating forces for independent India. The territories of these princely states were also vaguely defined.[1] Geographically, the princely states were scattered over every part of India (Fig.11). The lack of geographical contiguity made it difficult to unite and integrate the territories of the various states into larger units.

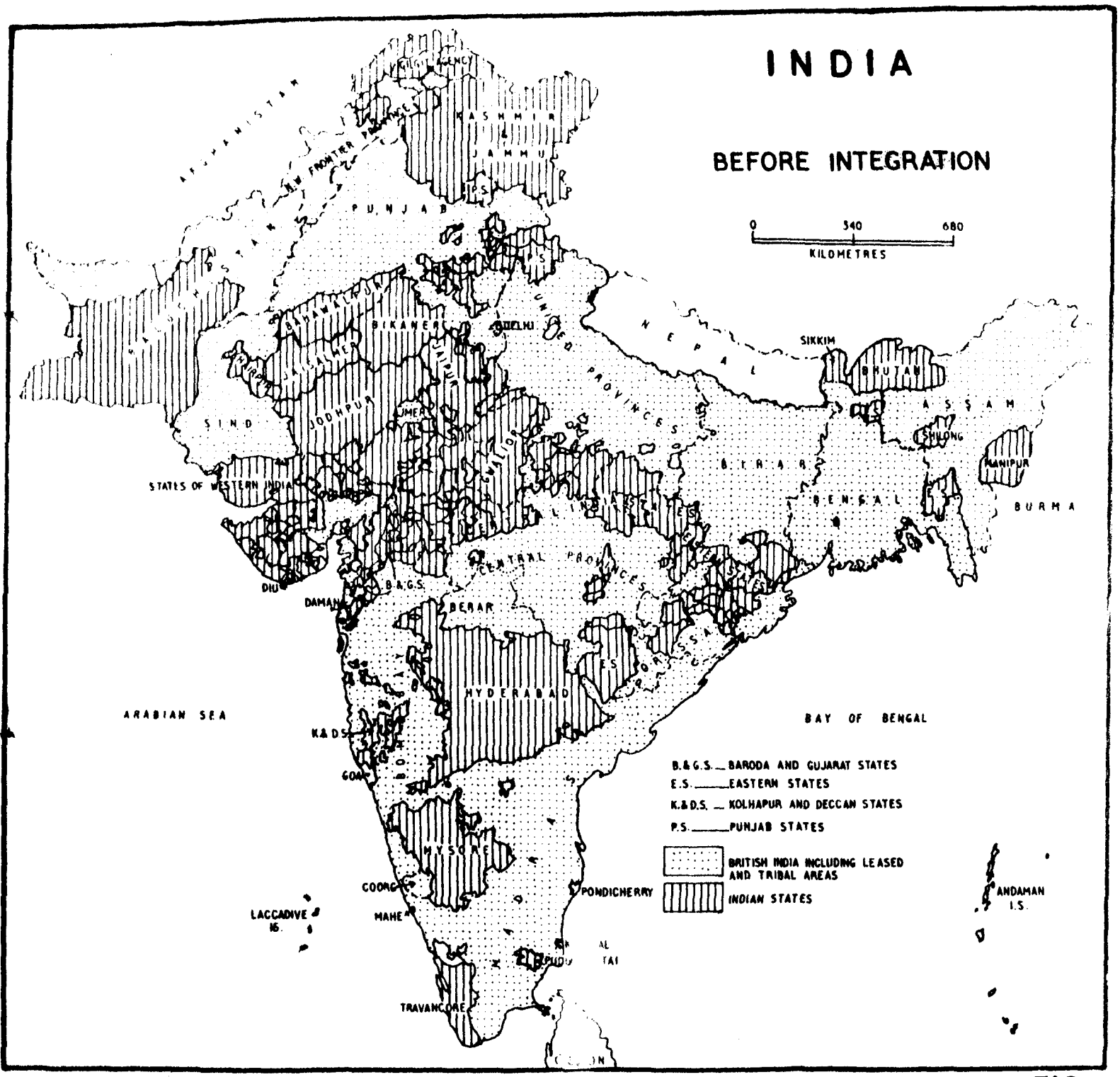
INDIA
BEFORE INTEGRATION
0
340
680
KILOMETRES
AFGHANISTAN
N.W. FRONTIER PROVINCE
KASHMIR
JAMMU
P.S.
PUNJAB
BAHAWALPUR
BIKANER
DELHI
NEPAL
SIKKIM
BHUTAN
ASSAM
SHILONG
MANIPUR
SIND
JODHPUR
UNITED PROVINCES
STATES OF WESTERN INDIA
BIHAR
BENGAL
BURMA
DIU
DAMAN
B.&G.S.
CENTRAL PROVINCES
BERAR
HYDERABAD
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BENGAL
K.&D.S.
GOA
MYSORE
COORG
MAHE
LACCADIVE IS.
PONDICHERRY
TRAVANCORE
ANDAMAN I.S.
B.&G.S. — BARODA AND GUJARAT STATES
E.S. — EASTERN STATES
K.&D.S. — KOLHAPUR AND DECCAN STATES
P.S. — PUNJAB STATES
BRITISH INDIA INCLUDING LEASED AND TRIBAL AREAS
INDIAN STATES

FIG.10


INDIA
AFTER INTEGRATION
0 340 680
KILOMETRES
JAMMU & KASHMIR
W PAKISTAN
PUNJAB
H.P.
PEPSU
DELHI
RAJASTHAN
AJMER
UTTAR PRADESH
NEPAL
TIBET
SIKKIM
BHUTAN
ASSAM
MANIPUR
TRIPURA
E. PAKISTAN
BIHAR
VINDHYA PRADESH
KUTCH
MADHYA BHARAT
BHOPAL
BENGAL
BURMA
SAURASHTRA
DIU
DAMAN
MADHYA PRADESH
ORISSA
BOMBAY
HYDERABAD
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BENGAL
GOA
MYSORE
COORG
PONDICHERRY
MAHE
MADRAS
KARIKAL
LACCADIVE ISLANDS
TRAVANCORE-COCHIN
CEYLON
ANDAMAN ISLANDS
H.P. -HIMACHAL PRADESH
P.E.P.S.U.-PATIALA AND EAST PUNJAB STATES UNION
UNIONS OF STATES
STATES REMAINING AS SEPARATE UNITS
GOVERNOR'S STATES
CENTRALLY ADMINISTERED AREAS
FOREIGN POSSESSIONS

FIG.11

The aim of the Department of State formed in 1947, was to stablish the unity of India. Within a few months all the states within the old geographical limits of British India had accepted union with India except Hyderabad, Junagarh, and Jammu and Kashmir. Later on, while Junagarh joined Pakistan, the other two states acceeded to India.

After Independence, India gained more territory and population through the integration of the princely states than it lost through partition. An essentially bloodless revolution, which brought about a great geographical transformation in the inner structure of the Indian nation has had no parallel in world history.

The process of unification that India witnessed after independence was far more than simple territorial integration. A common legal system and a uniform judicial administration were adopted, system of transportation and communication was developed, cutting across the territories of the former princely states and British provinces. This functional integration has provided the country with some important ingredients of unity.

REORGANIZATION OF STATES

A common language in India could be a powerful basis for national unity, but according to the 1951 census there were 844 languages and dialects in the country.[2] The 14 major regional languages, specified in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India, are spoken by 91 per cent of the enumerated population of the remaining tongues, 63 are "foreign" languages, and another 720 are spoken by fewer than 100,000 persons each. In India a linguistic group seldom includes in any large area a majority of more than 75-80 per cent, and it often has not been possible to form a linguistic state where the minorities are even less than 20-25 per cent.

The vast majority of Indian languages fall into two major groups, one concentrated in the north and one in the south. The northern languages are Indo-Aryan and are derived from the Sanskrit family, whereas the South Indian languages are not. Since Hindi is spoken by majority of people, it was made the national language. But the people in the south felt unhappy at this decision. It would seem, however, that the decision was quite sound because amongst the 14 major languages, Hindi was spoken by the largest percentage, that is, about 42 per cent

of the population.[3] The thickly populated Hindi-speaking Ganga plain is a compact region linguistically. Significantly, the fewest boundary changes in the post-independence were made in this plain where Hindi is the predominant language.

Linguistic states, do have some advantages. Moreover the Indian National Congress had promised the people that after India gained Independence the boundaries of states would be redrawn mainly on the basis of languages. Hence the State Reorganization Act was passed in 1955, and political map after the reorganization showed 14 states and six centrally administered territories (Fig.12). Although the recommendations were carefully made, the report was strongly criticised by many sections of the population.

After the implementation of the recommendations of the States Reorganization Commission and other Commissions, a clear political picture of India emerged out in 1971 (Fig.13) in which the boundaries of the states were clearly demarcated.

The reorganization of states on a linguistic basis has caused a number of inter-state and national problems. Linguistic states create a certain danger


INDIA
REORGANIZATION OF STATES
1956
100 50 0 100 200 300 400 500
KILOMETERS
JAMMU & KASHMIR
HIMACHAL PRADESH
PUNJAB
HARYANA
DELHI
RAJASTHAN
UTTAR PRADESH
NEPAL
SIKKIM
BHUTAN
NEFA
NAGALAND
ASSAM
AUG 1, 1960
MANIPUR
TRIPURA
BIHAR
WEST BENGAL
GUJRAT
MADHYA PRADESH
ORISSA
DIU
Diu and Nagar havili
APRIL 30,1960
MAHARASHTRA
ANDHRA PRADESH
GOA
(DEC. 18.1960)
MYSORE
LACCADIVE ISLANDS
KERALA
MADRAS
PONDICHERRY
ANDAMAN ISLANDS
CEYLON
LATER CHANGES
UNION TERRITORY

FIG.12

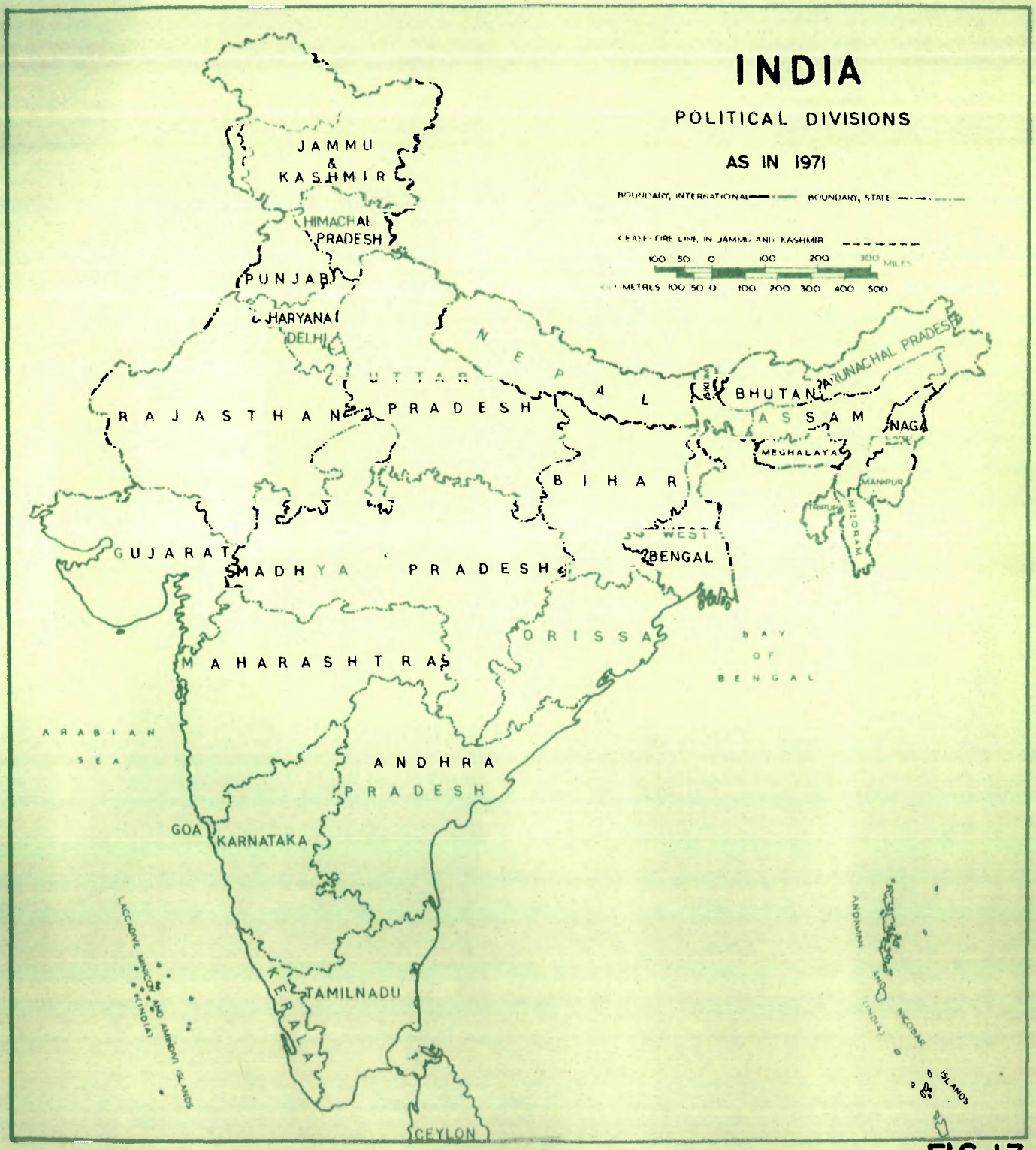
INDIA
POLITICAL DIVISIONS
AS IN 1971
BOUNDARY, INTERNATIONAL
BOUNDARY, STATE
CEASE-FIRE LINE IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR
100 50 0 100 200 300 MILES
METRES 100 50 0 100 200 300 400 500
JAMMU & KASHMIR
HIMACHAL PRADESH
PUNJAB
HARYANA
DELHI
UTTAR PRADESH
RAJASTHAN
NEPAL
BHUTAN
ARUNACHAL PRADESH
ASSAM
NAGA
MEGHALAYA
MANIPUR
TRIPURA
MIZORAM
BIHAR
WEST BENGAL
GUJARAT
MADHYA PRADESH
ORISSA
BAY OF BENGAL
MAHARASHTRA
ARABIAN SEA
ANDHRA PRADESH
GOA
KARNATAKA
KERALA
TAMILNADU
LACCADIVE MINICOY AND AMINDIVI ISLANDS
ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS
CEYLON

FIG.13

to the national unity, for they foster a feeling of regionalism, hinder economic co-operation between the states, and disturb the peace of national scene.

* * *

There are of course many problems, national as well as international which India had to face since 1947. Some of the problems have been solved but many remain. We may here refer to three of the several problems for testing our hypotheses mentioned earlier. These are (a) the Sino-Indian Border Dispute, (b) the Kashmir Problem, and (c) the problems of the Northeastern Hill Region.

(a) The Sino-Indian Border Dispute

Sir Henry McMahon could never have believed that the line he drew on a map to delimit the frontier between India and what is now China's Tibetan region would lead to an armed conflict between two neighbouring countries which for centuries had cordial relations.

The McMahon Line was the result of a conference convened by the British Government at Simla in 1912-13 to fix the boundaries between India and Tibet, and Tibet and China. McMahon who was then a Secretary in the British Foreign Office, presided over the conference.

The plenipotentiaries of the three countries agreed at Simla to the demarcation of a frontier which has been the 'natural, ethnic and administrative' boundary, running some 850 miles along the high watershed ridges of the Himalayas from Thala in Bhutan to the Kiphu Pass on the Burmese border and beyond. This line clearly marked out what was the North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA), then fully under British control.

The Chinese representative, however, did not ratify the document. He said that the agreement was arrived at outside the Simla conclave and alleged that McMahon had struck a deal through a secret exchange of letters with the representatives of Tibet.

The present Chinese Government argues that the agreement was illegal because it contravened the Anglo-Chinese Convention (1906), the Anglo-Chinese Convention (1907) and the Nine-Power Treaty (1922) which gave Tibet the status of its vassal state. It further asserts that the Simla conference had only discussed the boundary between Outer and Inner Tibbet and not between Tibet and India.

The fact is that Tibet, as an autonomous State, had concluded treaties with Ladakh in 1684 and with Nepal

in 1856. The latter was in operation until it was abrogated by the Sino-Nepalese Treaty of 1956.

Much before the McMahon Line was drawn, a fairly well-established border existed between Tibet and India. The British Indian Government had entered into a series of agreements with the many indigenous tribes in this region, making out the Balpara Frontier Tract and the Sadiya Frontier Tract, which together largely constituted the North-East Frontier Agency area. The tribes living to the south of the McMahon Line - Monbas, Akas, Daflas, Miris and Abhors - were of the same ethnic stock as the other hill tribes of Assam and had no kinship with the Tibetans. These tribes had accepted British control.

When the boundary question escalated, Chou En-lai, the then Prime Minister of China wrote a series of letters to Jawaharlal Nehru, the then Prime Minister of India, in which he rejected "the so-called McMahon Line" as a product of "British aggression against the Tibetan region of China". Nehru emphatically asserted that the McMahon Line alone could be the basis of negotiations, because it was the 'natural ethnic and administrative' international boundary.

On October 19, 1962, came the Chines attack in both the eastern and western sectors of the Indian border. China's massive armies overran the limited Indian defence positions. However, the two countries agreed to a cease-fire and disengagement of troops on the basis of the "line of actual control". This has meant a loss of 8,500 square miles (2,500 square miles in the eastern sector) to India.

(b) The Kashmir Problem

Kashmir became a bone of contention between India and Pakistan and led to armed confrontation in 1948 and again in 1965.

At the time of partition, Jammu and Kashmir was a princely state, and like all princely states of India, it had the option to accede to either India or Pakistan. The State became a part of India when the Maharaja signed the Instrument of Accession on October, 27, 1947.

In 1948 India took the Kashmir dispute to the Security Council of the U.N.O. The dispute was discussed several times on different occasions in the Security Council but no political solution could be achieved, mainly because Pakistan did not agree to the conditions laid down by India. Now the problem of Kashmir has been swept under the United Nation's carpet.

Kashmir is neither a miner's paradise nor an agricultural storehouse, but it has a very strategic location. It is not surprising that it became a pawn on international political chess-board.

(c) Problems of the Northeastern States

The Northeastern region comprises five States and two Union Territories, all carved out of the original Assam Province of pre-Independence days. The five States are: Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Manipur and Nagaland. The two Union Territories are Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh (Fig.14). What is prevailing in the Northeastern region is not a law-and-order situation, but a situation of psychological disturbance. This is why conventional solutions have so far failed to bring peace to the area.

Assam and the entire Northeastern region is connected with India only through a very narrow strip of land, the so-called Siliguri Neck. The tenuous link is a fact of geography and history with which neither the part nor the whole have entirely come to terms. This will take time. The Northeast region, which wants constant assurances that it is not forgotten.

The problems of Assam and of its other six sister States are not all self-inflicted. They arise from several

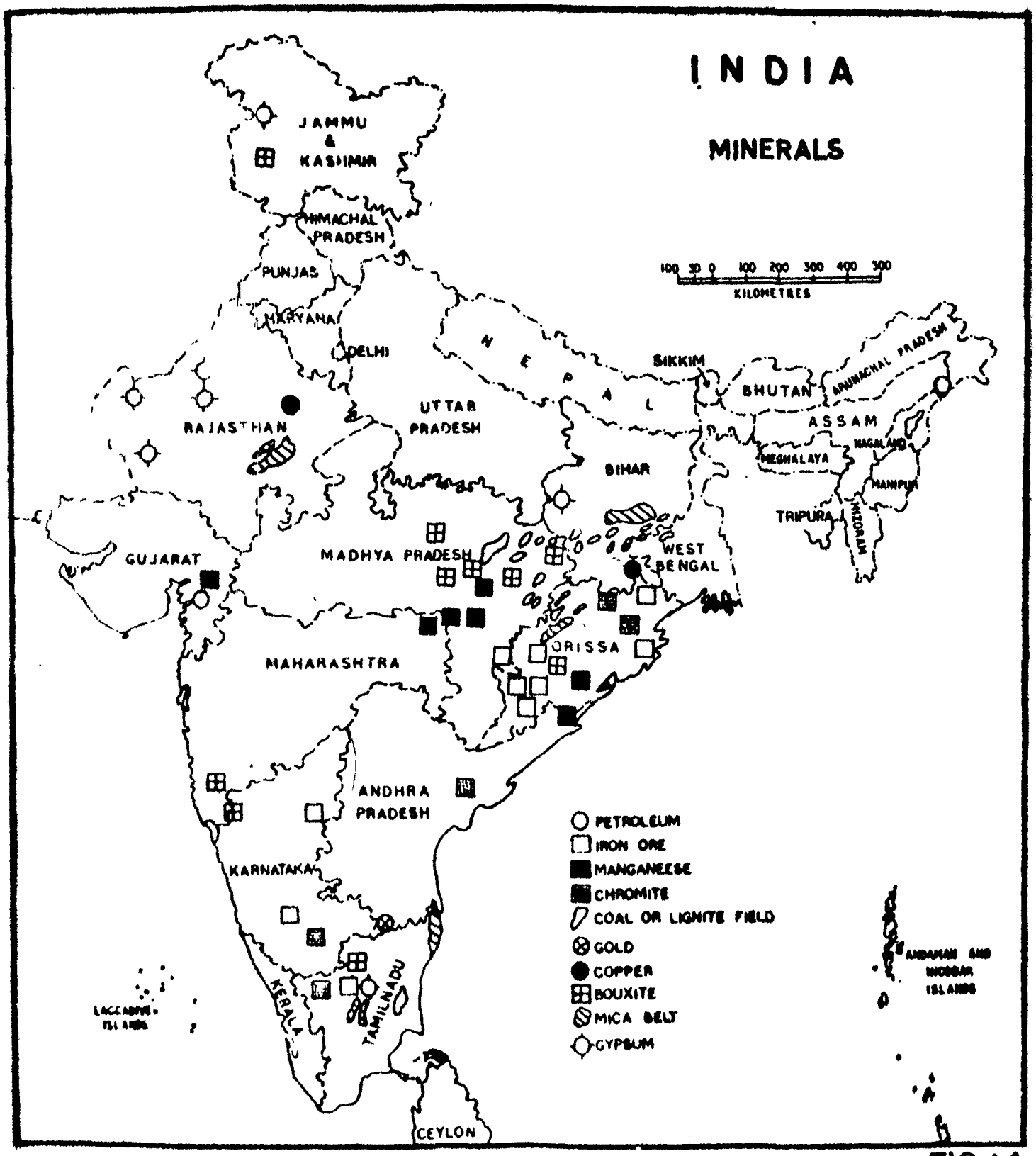
INDIA
MINERALS
100 50 0 100 200 300 400 500
KILOMETRES
JAMMU & KASHMIR
HIMACHAL PRADESH
PUNJAB
HARYANA
DELHI
RAJASTHAN
UTTAR PRADESH
NEPAL
SIKKIM
BHUTAN
ARUNACHAL PRADESH
ASSAM
NAGALAND
MEGHALAYA
MANIPUR
TRIPURA
MIZORAM
BIHAR
WEST BENGAL
GUJARAT
MADHYA PRADESH
ORISSA
MAHARASHTRA
ANDHRA PRADESH
KARNATAKA
KERALA
TAMILNADU
LACCADIVE ISLANDS
ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS
CEYLON
PETROLEUM
IRON ORE
MANGANESE
CHROMITE
COAL OR LIGNITE FIELD
GOLD
COPPER
BOUXITE
MICA BELT
GYPSUM

FIG.14

factors based on history, politics and geography. If the British had not struck oil in the State or found it suitable for tea cultivation and for a plywood industry, they would in all probability not have laid down a railway connecting link, imported cheap labour from other States. This historical fact has spawned scores of other problems.

The British may have organised tea, coal, oil, jute and plywood industries in Assam, but they kept all major economic activities connected thereto, including storage, sales, marketing, banking, forwarding and so on away in Calcutta. The cumulative effect of the imperialist pattern of the economy was to hold all economic activities in Bengal and not in the State of origin. The Assamese naturally resent this. Their frustration has now found expression in their wrath against those whom they call "foreign nationals", both Hindus and Muslims, but mainly Muslims from Bangladesh.

The Government of India has been trying to defuse the problems of the Northeastern region. It is obvious that the demand that the so-called "foreign nationals" should be expelled from Assam is unacceptable to the Government of India on constitutional, legal, moral and practical grounds. The agitators of Assam must realize

that the solution to their problem lies in a guarantee and realization of economic development.

When India becamc independent one of the major tasks was the consolidation of its territory, which, owing to the existence of numerous princely states, appeared as "mouth-eaten". The merger of the princely states into India was achieved in a peaceful manner, except in the case of Hyderabad where "police action" had become necessary owing to the activities of a party known as Khaksaars. This process of consolidation foretold that the future India shall have a great centrality of administration and the government policy shall be, as far as possible, according to the Gandhian principle of persuasion rather than coercion.

One of the important questions which had to be tackled at the time when the new constitution was being framed was that of a common language. The constitution recognized 14 regional languages as national languages (to which one more, namely, Sindhi, was added later). With the blessings of Gandhiji and the support of leading Congress leaders it was decided that Hindi should be the official national language. The fact that the Constituent Assembly was equally divided on the issue and the matter

was decided by the casting vote of the President was a clear indication of the strength of the opposition to the legislation, mainly from the non-Hindi speaking areas.

During the British rule, English had become a sort of lingua franca of the educated class and, indeed, had worked as a cementing force binding the different parts of the country and even united the national struggle for independence. However, since it was argued that this language was restricted to the educated few, it was accorded the status of "link language". In fact, this "link language" was, and still remains necessary for centrality of administration.

As mentioned earlier, the states of India were re-organized on linguistic basis with the result that of the 15 languages listed in the Schedule, all but three -- Sanskrit, Kashmiri and Sindhi -- became the official languages of the various states. The adoption and promotion of regional languages is necessary for the flowering of regional culture and genius as also for the spread of literacy. But it is disturbing to note that it has also led to a deepening sense of parochialism and regionalism, which of course are extremely inimical to the Ganahian principles, to the need of centrality of administration and to the philosophy of socialism.

We may now view our hypotheses in the light of the three border problems which we have mentioned above.

The Sino-Indian border confrontation forcefully brought to light the fact that the far-flung peripheral areas were very vulnerable and to that extent the centrality of administration was an absolute necessity both for the purpose of defence and for the economic development of those regions. It also highlighted the fact that despite its commitment to the philosophy of "Panchsheel" and to the policy of non-alignment in the international power game, India needs some thing more substantial than the Gandhian philosophy of ahimsa. It needs military preparedness.

As for the Kashmir Problem, which is now frozen along the "actual line of territorial control" between India and Pakistan, it is not a dead horse and may be flogged any time by Pakistan. Kashmir is now irrevocably an integral part of India and all that Pakistan can do is to mount another foolish military campaign which would hurt, as it has three times in the past, both India and Pakistan. Only a strong central government can handle this problem.

Finally, the problems of Assam and the Northeastern Hill States have given some lessons. Firstly, the Assamese

agitation, swearing by Gandhi and his philosophy of non-violence have taken recourse to bandhs, strikes, boycotts and civil disobedience (not unmixed with a certain measure of violence) to force their unacceptable demands regarding the non-Assamese population which they call "foreigners". The Gandhian instrument of non-cooperation has already brought immense damage to the state. The non-cooperation movement in Assam and the militant underground rebels in Nagaland, Mizoram and Manipur present a challenge to the government and centrality of administration is a pre-requisite for the solution of the problem.

Socialism, here or elsewhere, if it means the welfare of the people, cannot take root in disturbed conditions.

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CHAPTER IV

ECONOMY

India is pre-dominantly an agrarian country. The various aspects of rural life and its problems are intractably inter-woven so that the organization of even the most generous account is a matter of great difficulty.[1] The economic picture of India at the time of independence was grim. Barely five per cent of the population earned more than enough for instance living, and millions were unemployed. Problems such as rehabilitating displaced persons from Pakistan; increasing the production of raw jute, cotton and food-grains to make up for the loss of territory to Pakistan; establishing communal harmony, and increasing even slightly economic level of the people loomed as formidable.

We may now examine the most important sectors of the economy and the related problems.

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture has been the primary occupation of India even from early days. The proportion of population dependent on agriculture has risen from about 65 per cent in 1872 for undivided India to 80 per cent in 1971 for India.

Four-fifths of the teeming population of the country still continue to live under rural conditions, and even the factory labour of the town as well as the commercial classes continue to retain their connection with the villagers from where they have migrated. India occupied an important position in the world amongst producers of primary products, both in the shape of food crops and raw materials.

Although an agricultural country with 70 per cent of its population dependent on farming and 82 per cent of its people living in rural villages, is still short of food-grains. This shortage is due to several agricultural problems, all of which have become matters of international concern in the last few years. The immediate concern is the acute shortage of food caused by unfavourable weather and the continuing rapid increase in population. In addition to the vagaries of monsoon and much inherently poor land there are several human factors responsible for creating the Indian food shortages. Among them are backward farming techniques, shortages of fertilizers, the lack of irrigation facilities, limited high cost rural credit, and unsatisfactory land-tenure system.[2]

The methods of cultivation in India are today what they were centuries ago. There are fundamentally same as

those followed for centuries in past in other countries. Agriculture is based on the attempt to satisfy the demand for grain as human food, fibre for clothing and oil for burning, with very little livestock. The agricultural implements, the plough and the spade are the same as of old.[3]

There are mainly four types of agriculture in India, namely hilly cultivation, wet agriculture, irrigation agriculture and dry agriculture. The variations are caused by topography, climate, soil and density of population. The rational pattern for agricultural development in India is the integration of animal husbandry and farming. There are regions which are beyond reach of irrigation facilities and which are frequently subject to drought. Neither canals nor tube-wells can supply water to them. They depend wholly on whatever little rain they receive. Hence, comes the importance of dry-farming. The cropping systems are also different in many regions. Double cropping means that a field replanted to a second crop after the first has been harvested. Though agriculture is practised throughout the country, there are certain areas which offer less opportunities for the cultivation of crops. The areas where the cultivation of land is difficult are eastern Maharashtra and eastern Madhya Pradesh and in Rajasthan

cultivation is extremely difficult in arid regions. Due to unhealthy climate in several districts of Assam as well as dense forests and mountains restrict cultivation to defined areas. In Himalayas where mountain prevents large scale cultivation, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa have areas where malaria is highly prevalent. All the same, cultivation of land in these areas is carried on in places which offer better conditions.

Development of agriculture, based on the utilisation of man-power resources of the country-side and the maximum use of local resources holds a key to the rapid development of the country. In India, agriculture is a very old occupation and the cultivators are intelligent and hard working -- though poor. Indian cultivators do not hesitate to accept new ideas and new methods if they are intelligently explained and demonstrated.

The net sown area in India is 45 per cent of the total area of the country, of which 15 per cent is double-cropped. This is in contrast with the net cultivated area in Japan (16 per cent) and in China (14 per cent). Cultivable waste is only 5.7 per cent and mostly consists of marginal lands. Thus, scope for extension of agriculture is highly limited and effort has to be directed towards its intensification. Moreover, nearly one-fourth of the total land area

(326.8 million hectares) is affected by severe soil erosion, and two-thirds of arable land needs soil conservation measures.[4]

Another problem is that the agricultural productivity of India is lower than that of other important agricultural countries of the world. In terms of percentage what 70 persons produce meant for 100 people in India can be compared to 10 persons agricultural product for 100 people in U.S.A. There is urgent need for reducing this percentage by corresponding increase in production. This low productivity of land in India is caused by the lack of assured and timely irrigation water, the low level of soil fertility in the absence of fertilising practices, use of poor seeds and lastly losses due to incidence of diseases and pests.

Despite the successive Five-Year Plans which began in 1950, agriculture remains the weakest part of the Indian economy. The pressure of population on agricultural land has not shown any appreciable decrease, 70 per cent of the workers still depending upon agriculture for their livelihood, accounting for nearly 46 per cent of the national income.

* * *

Having taken into account a very generalized picture of agriculture in India, we may now turn our attention to some of the problems which have political implications.

First of all, there is the basic problem of land reform, which is essential not only for a sound development of agriculture but also for the well being of the peasantry. It is evident that an impoverished and discontented peasantry cannot for long be the basis of a democratic society. It is true that a great deal of legislation has been done in this matter but in most states much remains to be done in implementing the laws which have too many loop-holes. Voluntary efforts such as bhoodan (land-gift) movement have not cut much ice and are not expected to do so in future. In fact, it would need sincere intention and effort on the part of the various state governments to implement sound legislation which may give the land to the actual tiller and to enforce a just system of land tenure.

The second problem which has political implications is that of agricultural self-sufficiency. Generally speaking, India produces all its requirements of food crops from its domestic production. However, it remains a truism that Indian agriculture is a gamble in monsoon. There are good, bad and normal seasons as far as the rain-bearing monsoons are concerned.

That agriculture plays a very important part in stabilizing the politico-economic conditions was sharply brought into focus in the years following Independence.

Before 1947, under the British rule, the main problem of agriculture was mainly a problem of extracting as much revenue from the cultivator as was possible. Since then, in a free India, the most important problem has been to make the country agriculturally self-sufficient. For a long time the country had to depend on import of foodgrains which meant a heavy drain on the foreign exchange resources. This, of course, has political implications in international affairs. The position, however, has markedly improved in recent years and on account of good or average monsoon years the government has been able to build up a buffer stock of foodgrains which not only is an insurance against lean years but also enables the government to hold the price-line against the unscrupulous speculators.

Local food shortages have in the past sometimes led to agitations, looting and rioting -- all with political overtones. On a larger scale also, "food" may become "politics". It is interesting to note that in 1967 at the time of General Elections, the voters rejected almost all the Chief Ministers holding economic portfolios as well the Central Minister for food.

The third problem is that the agricultural sector is mostly owned and dominated by rich peasants -- the "kulaks". Government policy does aim at bringing benefit

to small cultivators and landless labourers. Bonded labour has been abolished by law but not in practice. The government provides bank loans, establishes co-operatives, grants subsidies, institutes extension services, creates irrigational facilities, supplies fertilizers and seeds of improved varieties and adopts many other such measures in the hope that these would wholly or partly benefit the poorer section of the peasantry. What happens, however, is that, by and large, all these facilities are devoured by the rich peasants and do not even trickle down to the small land-holders or the landless. Class power, bribery and corruption are the chief instruments for perpetuating the status quo. In fact, it is a situation in which the economic law that the rich should become richer and the poorer should become poorer operates fully. The much talked off Green Revolution, confined mainly to Punjab, Haryana and Western Uttar Pradesh, did go a long way in increasing the gross production. But it is common knowledge that almost all the benefit has accrued to the kulaks. Their prosperity and needs have obliged them to draw a good part of their labour force from distant places, particularly eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. It would be pertinent to assess the striking increase in the number of such workers who have poured into Punjab in recent years, and continue to pour in.

The capitalization of agriculture which strengthens the kulaks and increases their economic might at the cost of the poorer peasantry does have serious political implications. Agriculture is a state subject and there is not much that the Central Government can do about it. So, here centrality of administration is generally at a discount. Furthermore the present developments as mentioned above certainly go against the grain of the avowed theory of socialism.

Still another problem created by the Green Revolution is that, as mentioned above, only a limited territory of the country has tasted its fruits. The greater part of the country has little share in the prosperity brought in by the Revolution. An increase in regional imbalances creates, in greater or lesser measure, regional tensions, which at any rate are dangerous portents for the national polity.

The fourth problem which has political implications is related to irrigation schemes. The creation and extension of these schemes is, first of all, a problem at the national level where the power of the centrality of administration has to be exercised. A number of inter-state river water disputes have been resolved but even now there are at least one hundred big and small projects which are

held up owing to these disputes. Again, new areas developed for irrigation are frequently faced with the problems of water distribution amongst the users and water claims very often lead to local political conflicts. Politicians sometimes contest elections on such local issues. The Ganganagar District in Rajasthan is a case in point where the reclamation of the desert by Ganga Canal has created local political conflicts.

Finally, we may consider government policy in respect of foodgrains. For many years the movement of foodgrains in the country was subjected to zonal restrictions and no trade was permitted between a surplus state and a deficit state and the latter were supplied their requirements by the Central Government. Gradually, however, their restrictions were lifted and were finally abolished in October 1977. This has greatly helped in easing the national food situation. At any rate, it is essential to guard against lean years and the Central Government has, therefore, built up a buffer stock by compulsory procurement of foodgrains in the form of levy from the farmers of surplus states. This matter, too, has a political aspect. The Chief Ministers of surplus states are not quite happy over the policy of compulsory procurement or at least insist on higher prices for the procured foodgrains. It is of

some interest to note that for quite some time no Chief Minister assumed the agricultural portfolio in his state.

MINERALS

Nature has been quite bountiful to India in endowing it with mineral resources. The mineral resources of India encompass a sufficient range of useful minerals which are required for economic development and in respect of several minerals the country could be self-sufficient. Before Independence, India was not an important mineral producer. In recent years much progress has been made in the discovery of mineralised areas and in the mining activity. The total value of all minerals produced is now more than Rs.13 million. Leaving aside fuel minerals (which we would consider later), the most important of the metallic and non-metallic minerals are iron ore, manganese ore, mica, gold, ilmenite, monazite, sircon, limestones and dolomite.

Minerals production varies from region to region. Generally speaking, while Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal are very important, states such as Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Harayana and Uttar Pradesh are relatively poor in mineral production (Fig.14). India possesses nearly one-fourth of the total world reserves of iron ore, the estimated reserves being 20,000,000,000 tonnes, which is

about 20 per cent of the world's reserves.[5] The value of an iron ore deposit depends not only upon its richness in ferrous content but also upon its location and the ease of mining. India is fortunate in this respect because most of its iron ore deposits are found within easy reach of the coal-fields. Dolomite and limestones necessary for smelting are also found in the neighbouring areas. India's position with regard to coking coal and lime, which are required by the iron and steel industry, is not satisfactory. It has been estimated that coking coal may not last for more than 70 years and limestone for 20 years.

India is the second largest iron ore producing country in the Commonwealth and 9th on the list of iron producing countries of the world. Her resources of high grade iron ore are the greatest in the world with the exception of Brazil. Almost all proven and probable reserves are located in the states of Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka.

India has to face competition in international trade as an iron ore exporter. The principal importers of Indian ore are Japan and some countries in eastern Europe. In the face of competition in the world market, India must export ore at a cheaper price by reducing the cost of mining, processing and marketing.

Manganese is another important mineral resource in India. Manganese is used for hardening iron and steel and has several other uses. India is the third largest producer of manganese in the world, with estimated reserves of about 20,000,000 to 25,000,000,000 tonnes of high grade and about 50,000,000 to 60,000,000,000 tonnes of low grade ore. The manganese mines are concentrated in the Chota Nagpur plateau and Madhya Pradesh.[6] In the international market the Soviet Union is a serious competitor of India in this commodity.

India is the largest mica producing country in the world, its share being more than three-fourths of the world production. Since early times, mica has been used in India in medicinal preparation and for decorative and ornamental purposes. Today, it is one of the chief strategic minerals and is indispensable in the electrical industry. It is very important from the point of view of foreign exchange earnings. The United States alone imports 40 per cent of India's mica. The important producing states are Bihar, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh.

India is only a minor producer of gold, accounting for only 1 per cent of the world's production. Even so, this production has considerable significance. The production is confind to the Kolar gold-fields of Karnataka.

There are certain political implications of mineral resources and production in India.

First of all, it should be noted that despite the wide range and extensiveness of mineral deposits, some vital minerals are totally absent in India, and for these the country has to depend on the foreign market.

Secondly, centrality of administration has been, and still remains, a basic feature of mineral production. All the concerned organizations, namely, Geological Survey of India, Indian Bureau of Mines, Mineral Exploration Corporation, and National Mineral Development Corporation are under the aegis of the Central Government. Even the State Mineral Corporations in different states have been brought under COSMIC (Council of States Mineral Corporations) in order to co-ordinate their activities at the national level.

Thirdly, it may be noted that the India's mineral wealth is concentrated in pockets leading to great regional disparities, which often results in political tensions. There are "haves" and "have-nots" and while the former on account of their mineral contribution to the national economy claim a larger share in the national resources, the latter clamour for a larger share in the mineral resources.

Fourthly, the fact has a political implication that large scale mining in India has assumed the nature of an "alien" economy for the mining industry largely depends on labour imported from other regions and the local population benefits very little from the operations of this activity. Its share even in the "multiplier effect" is very low.

Finally, there is the problem of labour-management relations which has political consequences but we shall deal with this in greater detail when we consider the manufacturing industries.

POWER RESOURCES

One of the most valuable assets of any country, and one which has a very direct bearing on its economic development, is industrial energy. Coal, petroleum and water power each has its place but it appears that there has been a considerable shift in the relative significance of the power resources in India, and water power has achieved more striking results.

Coal

Coal is largely of the bituminous variety and is concentrated in the states of Bihar and West Bengal where the better known fields are Bokaro, Daltanganj, Giridih,

Jharia, Karanpura and Raniganj. The production of coal rose from 30 million tonnes in 1947 to about 100 million tonnes in 1977.

With about 3 per cent of world's output, India shares 8th place with Japan. Reserves of medium and poor qualities are abundant. Most of the lower Gondwana seams which yield 95 per cent of Indian Coal are preserved, in the faults of 4 great permian basins in the north of the plateau.[7]

Considering that India is fairly rich in coal and water power resources and deficient in petroleum and natural gas, the uneven distribution of coal has major political implications. For example, coal deficiencies are acute in the heavily populated areas of South India. Coal transportation from the north is difficult and costly. Also the lack of coal of Maharashtra and Gujarat is a serious hindrance to industrial expansion in those states, which are pressing hard for equal consideration in locating new industrial establishments.

Water Power

Hydro power constitutes the most economic source of power development in the country. Its intrinsic economic

value has been further enhanced as a result of recent increase in the price of oil and coal. Hydro-electric power stations contribute about 40 per cent to the total present production of electrical energy in the country. The economically exploitable hydro power potential of the country has been assessed by a systematic survey carried out by the erstwhile Central Water and Power Commission during the period 1953-60.

The region-wise distribution of the hydro-electric potential tentatively re-assessed by the CEA and the potential already developed and under development are given below in Table I.

TABLE I

Regional Distribution of hydro potential

Region	Hydroelectric potential as per tentative reassessment by CEA	Potential developed MW at 60% F.	Potential under development
Northern	27800	2565	1661.13
Eastern	7500	575	875.83
Western	7600	1196	134.16
Southern	13100	3232	2322.33
North-eastern	20200	45	197.50
Total All India	76200	7613	5190.95

Source: Ministry of Energy.

Existing hydro-electric power facilities are concentrated principally in Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Orissa, Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir. Punjab and Tamil Nadu are the leading states in installed capacity. Punjab is the predominantly hydro-electric power-consuming State. Assam, with half potential, has only a slight development of its hydro-electric resources.

The cost of water power development, including the essential transmission lines, is so high that the need for power in most parts of the country may be met only by thermal generator.

Coal is the largest naturally occurring source of commercial energy in India and is one of the principal sources of power production. At present, coal-based thermal plants contribute about 56.6 per cent of the total power generation. The total installed generating capacity of the coal-based thermal power stations in the country is 11,714 MW at the end of February, 1978.

Most of the Thermal stations are coal-based. There are seven thermal stations which use oil. Gas is used only by two stations.

The capacity of a thermal plant is determined by a number of factors, such as the need for annual maintenance

of boilers, uniformity in load conditions, forced outages, etc. Thermal stations, in an inter-connected system may be expected on an average to generate 4500 G.W.A. per kw.

The Region-wise actual energy generation during last year and anticipated generation during this year from the thermal power stations in the country are given in the Table II.

The energy generation from thermal units during 1978-79 is expected to be about 8.5 per cent more than the energy generation during 1977-78. The maximum increase is anticipated in the Northern Region.

The total installed capacity as in March 1978 was 25,940 MW and the gross energy generated was 98,686 MKWH.

In the near future coal is expected to become the most important source of industrial energy in India. The establishment of gigantic super-thermal power stations with capacities of more than 500 MW is a step in this direction. Mines crossing the political boundaries of the state create tension between adjoining states.

TABLE II

Thermal Energy Generation

1978

Region	Energy generated in thermal power stations during 1977-78	Energy generated in thermal power stations during April to December 1978	Anticipated energy generation from thermal power station during January to March 1979	Total energy generation from thermal power stations during 1978-79	Percentage increase (+)/decrease (-)
Northern	11641	8448	4709	13157	(+) 13.02
Western	21310	16567	6673	23240	(+) 9.06
Southern	7692	5532	2480	8012	(+) 4.16
Eastern	13008	10037	3756	13793	(+) 6.03
North-Eastern	584	501	152	653	(+) 11.82
All India Total	54235	41085	17770	58855	(+) 8.52

Petroleum

Petroleum and its products are very important for transport and industries. Estimates of proven reserves change from year to year. The estimate as in 1975 was 658 billion barrels. Since then big finds such as Bombay High have been made.

The important oil fields of India are in Assam (Digboi, Makum, Naharkotiya, Patharia, and Badarpur), in Gujarat (Ankleshwar, Cambay and Kalol), and in Bombay High. The domestic needs and the general energy crisis in the world has forced the Indian Government to devote much attention to oil explorations.

A political aspect of oil production emerged in the seventies, which was the result of the oil policy of the OPEC. India's political relations with the oil producing countries is bound to be influenced by itsoil needs.

Atomic Energy

Atomic energy for peaceful purposes is being developed, though a very small scale. It has been estimated that the country has one of the world's richest deposit of Thorium along the coast of Kerala (about 200,000 tonnes

with 9 per cent concentration). The Tarapur Atomic Power Stations (near Bombay) with power capacity of 380 MW., was initiated towards the close of the Second Plan. Two of its reactors were in operation as from February 1969. In 1965-66 another centre for producing atomic energy was established in Rajasthan on the Ranapratap Sagar Dam with the capacity of 200 MW. Kalpakkam in Tamil Nadu will have the third atomic energy plant in India with the installed capacity of 400 MW. In the initial stages the United States and Canada gave significant help to India to develop its nuclear power facilities. In recent years, however, they have withheld this help for the reason that India refuses to sign the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty. India has re-affirmed that it follows a policy of peaceful co-existence and would not produce atomic weapons, although it is capable of doing so. The hardened attitude of the U.S.A. and Canada towards India in this respect has to a significant extent strained political relations between India and U.S. - Canada.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

India is still a country of limited industrial development when compared with the advanced countries of the world.

An important feature of industrial growth in the country after Independence has been the rapid expansion of the public sector. In 1951, there were only five non-departmental public undertakings with an investment of Rs.29 crores. In 1980, the number of giant enterprises in the public sector had increased to 28. The total investment in public sector undertakings had increased to Rs.15,000 crores, the total annual production being more than Rs.17,000 crores. The public sector provided employment to 1,638,000 persons, disbursing to them about Rs.1,750 crores. These enterprises produce diverse products such as steel, coal, aluminium, copper, heavy and light engineering products, fertilizers, basic chemicals, drugs, minerals, petroleum products, locomotives, aircraft and ships. The most industrialised states today are Maharashtra, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Madhya Pradesh. The value of output of each of these nine states is more than 4 per cent of the reporting factories, 81.25 per cent of the productive capital, 83.51 per cent of the total employment, 84.76 per cent of the total output and 83.62 per cent of the value added. Three states, namely, Kerala, Haryana and Punjab have a share of 2.70 per cent, 2.30 per cent and 2.22 per cent respectively of the output.

They also account for 10.23 per cent of the total reporting factories, 7.34 per cent of the total productive capital, 7.82 per cent of the total employment, 7.22 per cent of the total output and 6.59 per cent of the total value added. Twelve states and Union Territories, namely, Assam, Jammu and Kashmir, Orissa, Rajasthan, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Delhi, Daman and Pandicherry have 91 per cent of the total factories with 21.34 per cent of the productive capital. They provide employment to 8.76 per cent of the total employment, generate 9.20 per cent of the total output and contribute to the national economy to the extent of 9.97 per cent of the total value added.[9]

With regard to industry-wise position, 19 industry groups taken together account for 56.73 per cent of the reporting factories, 94 per cent of productive capital, 85.76 per cent of total employment, manufacture. Among the industry groups, '231' - spinning, weaving and finishing of textiles is a major one. The share of this industry group alone to the value added is 18.87 per cent and it accounts for 10.29 per cent of the reporting factories, 7.09 per cent of the productive capital, 26.58 per cent of the employment and 18.20 per cent of the value of output.

Independent India's industrial policy was first announced in 1948. This envisaged a mixed economy with an overall responsibility of the government for planned development of industries and their regulation in the national interest. While it reiterated the right of the state to acquire an industrial undertaking in public interest, it reserved an appropriate sphere for private enterprise. The present policy is to develop the Public Sector as the commanding heights of the national economy.

Because of the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1948, India has made tremendous progress in the development of manufacturing industries under the successive Five-Year Plans. Industrial development is being pursued both in the public and private sectors on a pattern of mixed economy. In addition to the expansion of the existing industries, a number of basic and capital goods industries such as iron and steel, chemicals and fertilizers, heavy electrical and heavy machine tools, and so on have been set up to obtain a balanced economic growth. Because of the rapid growth and diversification on industry, the past decade may be described as the beginning of an industrial revolution in India.

From the point of view of distribution of manufacturing industries, the geonomic forces such as raw

materials, power, labour, transport, markets and finance have influenced the locational pattern in India. These forces also explain the reasons for concentration of certain industries in definite areas. Industries which use raw materials in their primary stage in large quantities, e.g. iron and steel or cement, are usually located near the source of raw materials. This is because some of the raw materials lose their weight in the process of manufacture or cannot bear high transport cost or cannot be transported because of their perishable character. Sea ports are generally preferred when the raw materials are to be imported. The availability of raw materials in the neighbourhood is responsible for the concentration of jute mills in West Bengal, iron and steel in Bihar and Bengal, sugar factories in Uttar Pradesh, and cotton mills in Maharashtra, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu. The concentration of a number of industries in South India, Maharashtra, Bihar and West Bengal has been due to the development of electric power from coal or water in these regions. The availability of power, fuel and facilities for transport greatly determine the rate at which an industry can grow.

INDUSTRIAL REGIONS

Though manufacturing industries are scattered throughout the country, there are three principal zones (Fig. 15):

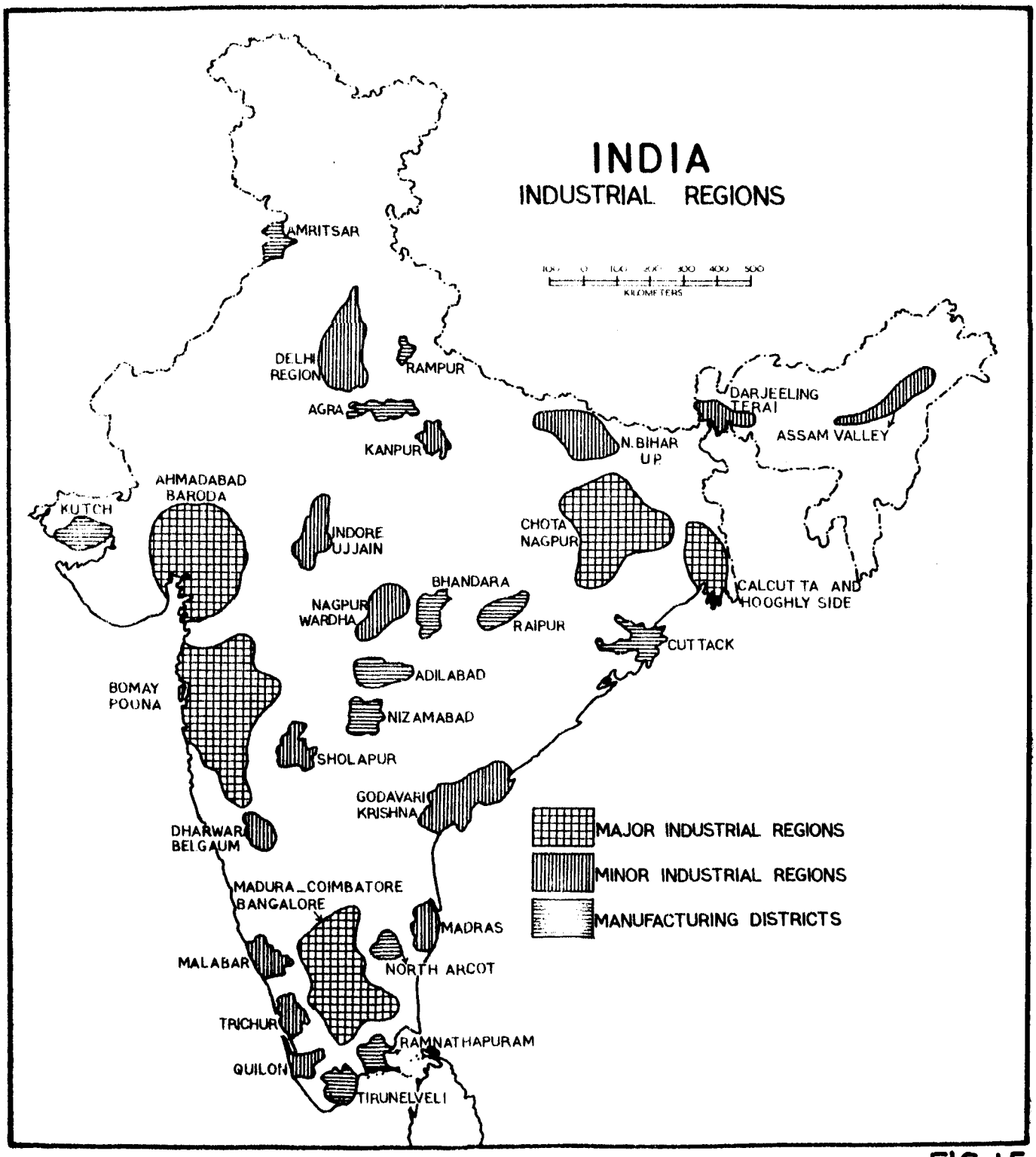
INDIA
INDUSTRIAL REGIONS
KILOMETERS
AMRITSAR
DELHI REGION
RAMPUR
AGRA
KANPUR
N. BIHAR U.P.
DARJEELING TERAI
ASSAM VALLEY
AHMADABAD BARODA
KUTCH
INDORE UJJAIN
CHOTA NAGPUR
BHANDARA
NAGPUR WARDHA
RAIPUR
CALCUTTA AND HOOGHLY SIDE
CUTTACK
BOMAY POONA
ADILABAD
NIZAMABAD
SHOLAPUR
GODAVARI KRISHNA
DHARWAR BELGAUM
MADURA_COIMBATORE BANGALORE
MADRAS
MALABAR
NORTH ARCOT
TRICHUR
RAMNATHAPURAM
QUILON
TIRUNELVELI
MAJOR INDUSTRIAL REGIONS
MINOR INDUSTRIAL REGIONS
MANUFACTURING DISTRICTS

FIG.15

(i) The Damodar-Hooghly Zone covers the south-eastern part of Bihar and the southern part of West Bengal. The industries are iron and steel, fertilizers, locomotives, jute, cotton, chemicals, paper, automobiles, glass, silk, aluminium etc.

(ii) The Western cotton-belt zone includes Maharashtra and Gujarat with industries such as rayon, cotton, wool, paper, chemicals, glass, sugar and automobiles in Bombay, Baroda, Ahmedabad, Surat, Poona, cotton textiles predominate.

(iii) The Southern Zone, a quadrilateral area covering Madras, Madurai, Coimbatore and Bangalore is noted for cotton, silk, chemicals, sugar, iron and steel, glass, aircraft, telephone equipment etc.

Both in the West Zone and Southern Zone, the chief source of power is hydro-electricity.

Other minor industrial areas in India are confined to (a) the Ganga-Yamuna region with Allahabad, Kanpur, Lucknow as nodes in the area; (b) Ghaziabad--Modinagar--Meerut--Saharanpur area; (c) Delhi and its surrounding areas, namely, Faridabad, Sonipat and Balabhgarh; (d) scattered centres such as Nagpur, Jabalpur, Bhopal and Indore in the central part of the country.[10]

All these minor areas have various kinds of industries such as cotton textiles, engineering, chemicals, paper, plastics, electrical goods, woolens, glass, sugar, tobacco, sheet-metals, cycles and autos. They are all market-oriented. The chief source of power is hydro-electricity.[11]

India is now the second largest producer of steel in the East and eighth in the list of world's industrial nations.[12] Its cotton textile industry is outranked only by that of the United States. In jute, the country is the world's leading producer. It makes fighter planes and transport planes, and has begun to produce tractors and tanks. In essence, India has made tremendous progress in various fields of industry. It may be noted that added-value in modern industry showed a 15-fold expansion from 1950-51 to 1975-76.[13]

In spite of the remarkable industrial progress achieved by India since independence, were not fulfilled. These unfulfilled conditions were that the vested interest of the private sector was not abolished, the capital goods industries were super-imposed on a basically market-oriented economy run by the profit-motivated businessmen, and there was an inadequate market within the country for the expanded

output of heavy industry. The capital goods produced by the heavy industries can be absorbed only if there is a long-term perspective of extending the public to the entire industrial sphere. This in turn requires a plan of progressive specialization of production. Shifting the emphasis to more consumer goods industries should be accomplished. The main problem is that the policies are not being implemented successfully. The best interest of the long-run growth of the economy is not to shift the emphasis away from a policy or industrialization but rather the creation of the political preconditions necessary for the successful implementation of the policies. The socialistic policy followed by the government probably has brought substantial changes in the industrial achievement of India. The socialistic pattern is probably more useful for heavy industries than for agricultural goods industries where 88 per cent of the people are involved. Indian Planning, unfortunately, is inspired more by political biases than by economic considerations. The policies are often not implemented as they are planned due to these biases.[14]

Progress made since independence has not brought in any significant change/the regional distribution of industries. There are marked regional imbalances in the level of

industrialization. The major areas of industrial concentration are: (i) the western region, where 47 per cent of the total industrial labour force is engaged in large-scale industrial establishments; (ii) the eastern region, where 42 per cent is so engaged; and (iii) the southern region where even now only 10.5 per cent is engaged in large-scale industrial establishments.[15] The northwest and northeastern regions are the poorest in industrial establishments.

Industries are developed primarily because of the potential resources available in an area and not on political considerations. Some political influence, however, is being exerted in decisions concerning the location of new plants. It is not unheard of that senior political leaders exert influence to establish public sector industries in their home constituencies.

Most of the large industrial complexes are situated near such big urban centres as Calcutta, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, Madras, Cochin, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kanpur, Bombay and Visakhapatnam. These areas have geographical advantages for establishing industries in their superior transportation, marketing, and other relevant facilities.

The iron and steel industry of India is making tremendous progress, and the export of semi-finished and

finished products is increasing. The market for Indian machine tools includes not only the developing countries of South Vietnam, Iran, Nigeria and Thailand but also technologically advanced countries such as the United States, Britain, Canada and West Germany. The major iron and steel plants established since independence in the public sector of the economy have increased the quality and export of steel goods. Besides the private sector and mini plants, four major iron and steel plants have been established as public undertakings with foreign collaboration during this period.

Each of these four large steel plants was established in its present location in one of four different states on the basis of availability of resources.

* * *

There are numerous problems which have to be faced in the industrial development of the country. The shortage of resources of all kinds, the ratio and relationship between the public and private sectors, the inefficiency of production units, the "sickness of industries, the labour-management relationship are some of the more important problems. It may be noted here that new investors often avoid the Calcutta region, the Ruhr of India, because of

political troubles. Labour difficulties are rife here and strikes and "gherao" (forced confinement of management personnel into their offices) by workers are too common. The strength of the labour unions and their mutual strife is a matter of considerable political importance. In the western and southern states of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa investment conditions are more stable. In Tamil Nadu and Kerala there are fewer economic troubles than in West Bengal and Bihar. It is understandable that investments in these states are increasing.

The Indian government does take noteof the grievances of all the states and does aim at the planning of industrial development which may be regionally balanced. New industries are being developed near large urban centres all over the country, for instance, ship-building in Visakhapatnam; machine tool, aircraft and telephone industries in Bangalore; heavy electronics in Bhopal; machine-building in Ranchi; and fertilizers, leather goods and oil-refining in Kanpur. Other industrial concentrations are being developed in Cochin, Mysore, Hyderabad, Kota and Amritsar. These scattered industrial developments are attracting workers from nearby areas, thereby transforming the economic base and hence improving the political stability of the various regions of the country.

A very important step has been taken by the Planning Commission, that of decentralizing the pattern of development of the ubiquitous industries to fit in the ideal of a socialist society. The Commission recommended that a large number of small towns, widely distributed over different parts of the country, should be developed into industrial townships with planned provision for small scale and light industries.[16]

India's small scale industries are essentially artisan enterprises. These industries use agricultural and other indigenous products and are oriented towards the village economy. Hence, they are more acceptable to rural people and at least partially fill the gap created by the inevitably unequal distribution of heavier industrial concentrations. These craft industries employ more people and produce a large quantity of goods than large-scale industries. The value of production from the ubiquitous industrial sector is about 30 per cent of the gross output of all the factories in the country.

The wide spread small industries provide work to seasonally unemployed persons and thus help to create political stability. Moreover, most work is provided in the villages where women can also share in the craft industries.

Therefore, the wide dispersal of the small industries will lower the dependency ratio and increase the overall productivity.

TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Transportation and communication are two of the several factors necessary to accelerate the pace of economic progress and political stability. In many instances they play a key role, and in all cases they set the limits of progress.[17] India is deficient in transportation and communication facilities. Although the nation accounts for 16 per cent of the world's population, it has only four per cent of the world's roads, two per cent of its rail freight, and one per cent of its trucks and buses. Regional food shortages, which still occur, illustrate strinkingly the need for better transportation and communication facilities.

The railway system in India is the biggest state undertaking and the world's second largest network under a single management, second only to that of the Soviet Union[18] (Fig.16). Since independence tremendous progress has been made in rail transportation. When India became independent in 1947, it inherited a railway system shattered by economic depression, worn out by abnormally heavy use in the war, and dismembered by partition. India's railways


INDIA
RAILWAYS
JAMMU & KASHMIR
PAKISTAN
CHINA
NEPAL
TIBET
HIMACHAL PRADESH
PUNJAB
HARYANA
DELHI
UTTAR PRADESH
RAJASTHAN
GUJARAT
MADHYA PRADESH
BIHAR
WEST BENGAL
SIKKIM
BHUTAN
ASSAM
ARUNACHAL PRADESH
MEGHALAYA
NAGALAND
MANIPUR
TRIPURA
MIZORAM
BANGLADESH
BURMA
ORISSA
MAHARASHTRA
ANDHRA PRADESH
GOA
KARNATAKA
KERALA
TAMILNADU
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BENGAL
CEYLON
LACCADIVE, MINICOY AND AMINDIVI ISLANDS (INDIA)
ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR
PORT BLAIR
REFERENCES
INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY
BOUNDARIES OF STATES
RAILWAYS
CAPITAL TOWNS OF STATES
OTHER TOWNS

FIG. 16

comprised not a single system but a large number of systems with different gauges. These systems are now organized into nine zonal systems, and some of the narrow-gauge tracks have been converted into meter-gauge tracks and meter-gauge ones into broad-gauge ones. Railway equipment is now reasonably sufficient for the needs of the country, and some is exported to Hungary, East Africa, Burma and Thailand. A new revolution to convert steam engines to diesel and electric locomotives is taking place. The number of passengers and amount of freight tonnage have increased tremendously. The total assets of the railways amount to Rs.53,450 million (the next being Hindustan Steel with only Rs.12,700 million) and the annual revenue is Rs.17,000 million.

There are direct political implications of rail transportation and the distribution of railway lines. The tenuity of the railway network in Assam, Orissa, Rajasthan and the southern states leading to geographical isolation of the areas causes political problems as well. The unity of the country can be enhanced by the further development and integration of railway lines throughout the country.

It is of some concern to note that as a means of attracting the attention of the government to a particular regional political problem, it is not uncommon for groups or individuals to disrupt railway movement. Damage to railway property has been increasing year by year.

Since 1951, India has increased its surface road mileage by 82 per cent. In the past 10 years, an average of 10,000 km. of newly surfaced roads had been constructed annually. The total length of the road network is over a million km. The number of motor vehicles increased by 166 per cent during 1951-66, commercial vehicles increased 149 per cent, and road mileage 140 per cent. In the same period, the amount of travel nearly quadrupled, and by 1976 roads accounted for nearly as much inter-city travel as railroads.[19] In 1977 the total road length was estimated to be 1.2 million km., made up of 0.5 million km. of metalled road and 0.6 million km. of unmetalled road. Still more road development is needed in rural areas (Fig.17). Approximately 82 per cent of India's people live in 570,000 rural villages. One out of three of these villages is more than 8 km. from an improved road, and only one out of nine villages is served by an all-weather road. In Uttar Pradesh where one-third of India's wheat is grown, food deficits can occur despite rich soil and the availability of substantial ground water resources because farmers are kilometers away from markets and have no roads. Nearly 36 per cent of the villages in the state are without a road, and in hilly areas 50 per cent of them have no road connections in Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Orissa, Western Rajasthan

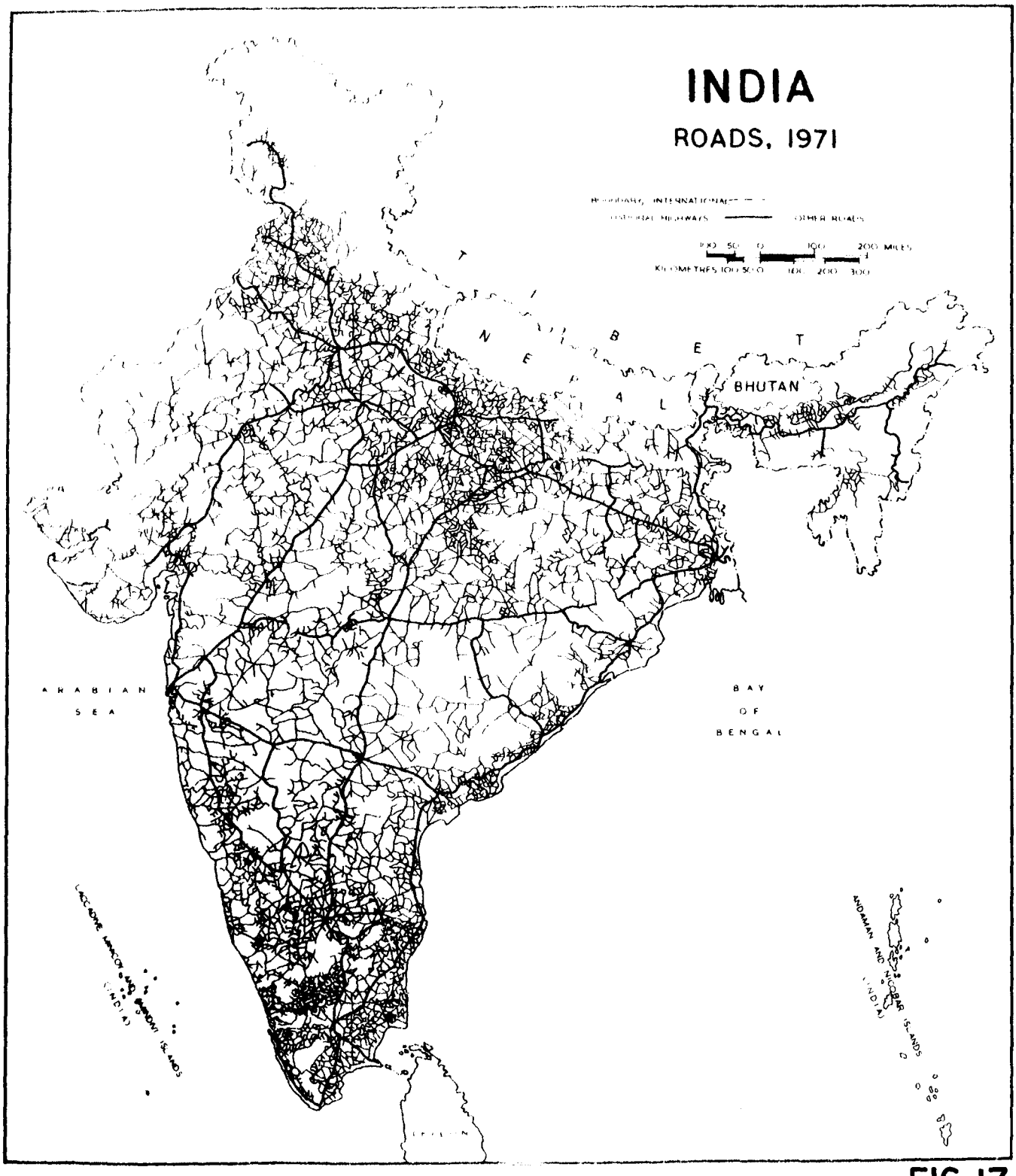
INDIA
ROADS, 1971
NEPAL
BHUTAN
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BENGAL
ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS (INDIA)
LACCADIVE, MINICOY AND AMINDIVI ISLANDS (INDIA)
CEYLON

FIG. 17

and parts of some of the southern states is an important factor in the shortage of tubewells (pumps), fertilizers and other agricultural needs.

The inadequacy of transportation has a direct bearing on the mobility of the people; on agricultural and rural development; on the supply of fertilizer, seed and food grains; on the exploitation of mineral resources; and on industrial deliveries and retail business. More transport facilities would mean greater social and economic, and consequently political cohesiveness in the country.

Near the northern border of the country, political factors have led to road construction for strategic reasons. By 1966, 3,765 km. of new roads with a width of 6.1 meters had been constructed; 3,090 km. of roads had been widened and surfaced between Sonamarg and Leh in Ladakh. In all, 12,708 km. of roads are being maintained by Border Roads Organization presently. The immediate programme undertaken as a result of the defence emergency included the construction of 5,360 km., of new roads near the border and the widening of 4,360 km.[20] This road-building activity related to national defence was necessitated by the 1962 Sino-Indian conflict.

Besides rail and road travel, air travel is increasing in India. Air travel, however, is not a major feature of the Indian transportation pattern. It may not become a regular feature even for the next generation, because it is eight times more expensive than railway travel. The immediate concern of government in relation to air transportation is the defence of the country. The national policy is not only to build its own fighter planes but also to purchase sophisticated aircrafts. Air transportation, indeed, is one of the keys to political stability and national security.

The telecommunications network is an almost equally important part of the political geography of the country. The post offices, the telegraph and telephone systems, and the radio and television stations are the media for political propaganda and for influencing public opinion. In India the postal and telegraph service is the second largest state undertaking, employing 500,000 people. There are currently more than 100,000 post offices, and the number of telephones is increasing rapidly.

Radio is probably the principal medium through which Indian political leaders communicate with the public. India's radio stations are able to reach 62 per cent of the nations area where 77 per cent of the population live.

All India Radio has installed community listening sets in about 150,000 villages. The broadcasts have, in a relatively short period of time, created an interest among rural folks in national and international issues along with their strictly local interests.

India has also introduced a television network in the Delhi, Lucknow, Kanpur, Bombay, Madras and Calcutta area etc., especially for educational purposes. In 1967, the only television transmission in India was from the five-kilowatt Delhi station of All India Radio, serving a radius of 30 km. At present there are about 100,000 television sets in Delhi. The setting up of Television Stations at Bombay (with repeater transmitter at Pune), Calcutta, Madras, Kanpur and Lucknow are extension of facilities in the Delhi TV station. There has been expansion of the range of Delhi Television broadcasts from a radius of 40 km. to 70-80 km. in 1970 with the new television tower coming into operation. Two firms in the large-scale sector had been licensed for the manufacture of 10,000 television sets each per year. Another two small-scale firms were granted licence to manufacture 5,000 television sets each per year. A national programme which would provide television to about 80 per cent of India's population during the next 10 years would be of great significance for

national integration, in development of social and economic schemes and in promotion of family planning units. The coverage of 80 per cent of the population will be through the community sets rather than individual ones. It is of particular relevance to the larger population living in isolated communities. All of the communication facilities have helped to improve the internal cohesion of the country and to broaden knowledge of and interest in international relations with the outside world.

Modern communications can play a tremendous role in educating the farmers, improving farm techniques, lowering the rural and urban birth rate, and uniting the nation. Major changes in the attitudes of the people can be brought about by use of the official communications network, changes which will improve the general standard of living and create a better image of the country in the comity of nations.

* * *

We may now consider the state of the chief sectors of Indian economy and assess the extent to which the three tenets of Gandhian principles, centrality of administration and socialism have been applied and with what success.

The Gandhian principle in agriculture envisages a peasant economy in more or less self-contained and self-sufficient villages with no great disparities in individual

land-holdings. This ideal has not been achieved and is probably impossible to achieve in the modern world. There is still much scope and need for land reform. The ideal of self-contained and self-sufficient villages are an impossibility in the context of the rapid and relentless growth of population. As for the economic condition of the peasantry, the kulaks seem to have gained more and more strength.

Centrality of administration in respect of agriculture is reflected in the fact that for a long time the country was divided into a number of zones as far as movement of food grains was concerned. Now that the zones have been abolished the Central Government remains under the necessity of building up buffer stocks of foodgrains and sugar in order to maintain supplies in lean seasons and to scarcity regions as well as to check the speculators by holding the price-line.

Regarding socialism in agriculture, it remains a far cry. As has been said earlier, benefits from the successive Plans have accrued mainly to rich peasants.

What is applicable to agriculture applies to irrigation also. Followers of Gandhian principles, believing in the motto that "small is beautiful" look at the bigger

valley projects with disdain and argue for small irrigation schemes. These latter have, of course, an important place in the economy but it is for any one to see that India's irrigation and flood problems will have to be dealt with through huge projects calling for a centrality of administration to a very great degree. The states cannot be allowed to go on quarreling for ever over water rights.

The main problem regarding the mineral resources of the country stems from the fact that they are very unevenly distributed creating great regional disparities. The Central Government has to play, of necessity, a balancing role in the utilization of these resources.

Considering that there is energy crisis the world over, the problem of power generation in India is not a novel thing. However, the official efforts have fallen too short of the needs and there is little sign that the situation is going to improve in the near future. Small generating units and unconventional sources of power can meet only a fraction of the present and ever-increasing requirements. A joint effort on the part of states as well as the Centre, in which bureaucracy gives place to sincerity of purpose and vision, is a great necessity.

Leaving his dialectical materialism aside, Lenin's simplistic definition that "Communism is Soviet system plus

electricity" is very worthy of consideration. Besides the provision of industrial power, electrification of villages achieved so far only in Punjab and Haryana, is a great necessity. The quint essence of Indian socialism, it may be said is "village panchayat system plus electricity".

It would entail a long discussion to examine the industrial development of India in respect of the three tenets mentioned above. We can do so here only briefly. The Gandhian view which lays all emphasis on village industries must be considered rather myopic. The neglect of large scale industries, a policy followed by the Janata Government (mercifully short-lived), can only lead to national disaster in this fast developing world. Village industries have to be expanded and are necessary. But the answer to the country's poverty lies in large scale industrialization.

This brings us to the relationship between the public and private sectors of industry. India aims at a mixed economy with a dominant public sector. The objects of the public sector are (a) to gain control of the commanding heights of economy; (b) to promote critical development in terms of social gain or strategic value rather than primarily on the consideration of profit; and (c) to provide commercial surpluses with which to finance

future development. It would be pertinent to ask whether these objectives are truly being fulfilled. As things are, the public sector is inefficient and wasteful. The task, however, is to streamline it and not throw it overboard. The role of administration is clear.

Regional disparities in industrialization are bound to occur but a wise government with socialism as its aim can handle the matter in such a manner that regional political tensions do not arise.

Labour-management relationship is a matter which is more than economic. It tends to translate itself into political idealogies and strife. A government of the people, by the people and for the people, swearing by socialism, should be capable of solving labour problems, of which India has perhaps more than its share.

We would have left transport out of this discussion because after all it is one of the several infra-structures of the economy, although it assumes the form of a sector itself. We have to consider it here because it is a pre-requisite of centrality, besides being a means of economic development. The government through all these years has not done too badly in respect of different types of transport. Much, however, remains to be done.

* * *

The constitution of India, Part IV, Article 38, while defining the social order for the promotion of the welfare of the people, lays down, amongst other things, the objectives that all citizens shall have the right to an adequate means of livelihood; that the ownership and control of the material resources of the country shall be so distributed as best to subserve the common good; and that the operation of the economic system shall not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment. So far these objectives have only be marginally achieved and from the account in the previous pages we may generalize that (a) the Gandhian economic view is too simplistic and naive for this age, Gandhiji's moral greatness notwithstanding; (b) centrality of administration, both at the central and state level has been increasing and is, in fact, necessary for a directed and projected progress; and (c) socialism, despite the sweet lip services it receives from almost all political parties, has yet to go a long way as far as India's evolution as a welfare state is concerned.

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CHAPTER V

DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS, SOCIAL CONFLICTS AND CLEAVAGES

I. DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

Population Size and Distribution

The population of India as recorded on 1st March 1981 was 683,810,051.[1] This figure includes the projected population for Assam as well as Jammu and Kashmir States, for owing to certain difficulties the Census could not be carried out in these two States, but is to be accomplished soon.

India is among the four largest countries in the world and is next only to China which has nearly 1,000 million persons. The population of the world in 1980 excluding India as estimated by the United Nations was 3,721 million. The countries with the largest populations were China (1000 million); India (684 million); U.S.S.R. (267 million); and U.S.A. (222 million).

These four countries contain nearly half the population of the globe and India is the second largest country in terms of population in the world today.

India's population has grown phenomenally over the years. Table III indicates the population of India as recorded at each of the censuses from 1901 onwards. The decadal growth rate and the progressive growth rate have also been indicated therein (Fig.18).

TABLE III

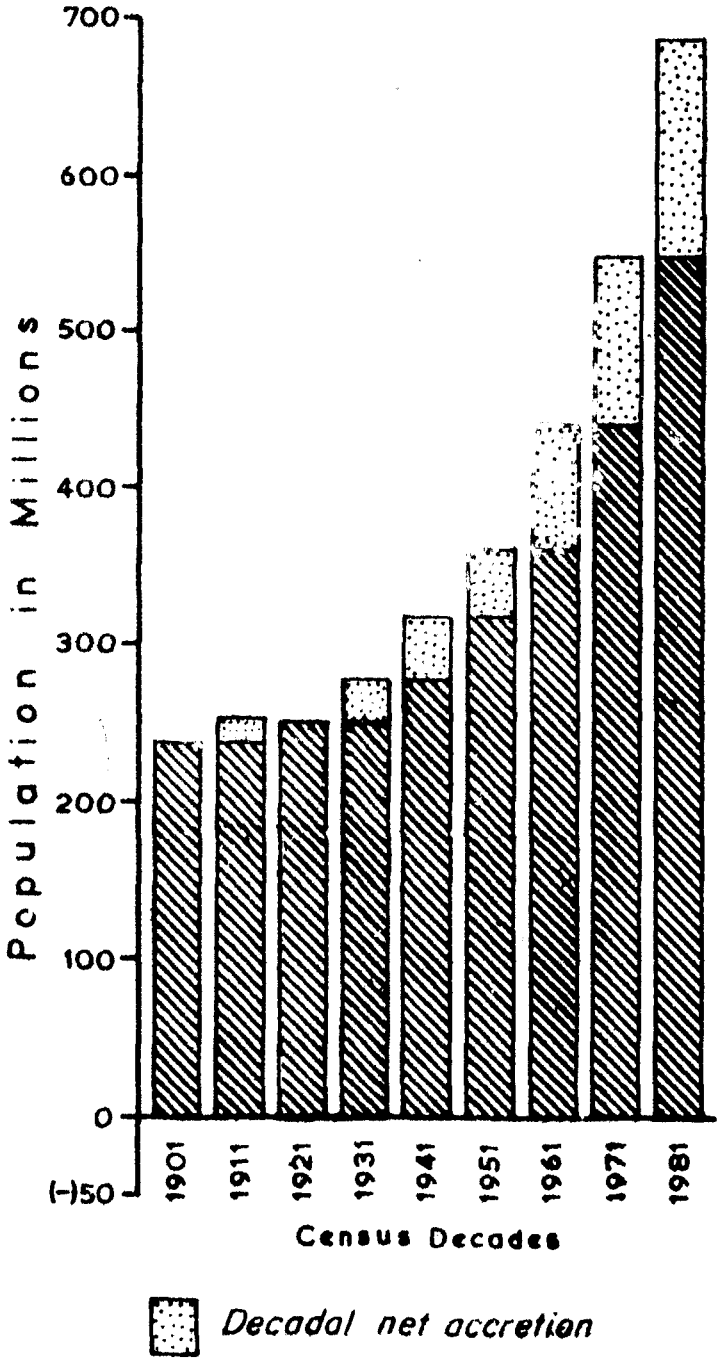
Population of India 1901-81

Year	Population	Decadal growth rate		Per cent progressive growth rate over 1901
		Absolute	Percentage	
1901	238,396,327	..	..	..
1911	252,093,390	+ 13,697,063	+ 5.75	+ 5.75
1921	251,321,213	- 772,177	- 0.31	+ 5.42
1931	278,977,238	+ 27,656,025	+11.00	+ 17.02
1941	318,660,580	+ 39,683,342	+14.22	+ 33.67
1951	361,088,090	+ 42,420,485	+13.31	+ 51.47
1961	439,234,771	+ 77,682,873	+21.51	+ 84.25
1971	548,159,652	+108,924,881	+24.80	+129.94
1981	683,810,051	+135,650,399	+24.75	+186.84

Except for a slight fall in the total population in the decade 1911-21, India's population has grown steadily but the growth rate has been remarkably high after 1951.

INDIA

Growth of Population
(1901 — 1981)



IN 1921 POPULATION DECLINED BY 772,177

FIG. 18

In absolute terms, India's population has increased by 136 million in the decade 1971-81. This increase is nearly 13 million more than the addition to the total population over the 50 years from 1901-51.

Table IV indicates the provisional population of the States as recorded at the 1981 and 1971 and the percentage contribution in terms of population of each of the States. Uttar Pradesh continues to dominate the scene and retains its first position. Most of the other States have continued to retain their original ranks. However, Rajasthan has stolen a march over Gujarat and has moved up from the 10th place in 1971 to the 9th place in 1981 while Gujarat has moved from the 9th place in 1971 to the 10th place in 1981. Delhi which was 17th in rank in 1971 has overtaken Jammu and Kashmir and moved to 16th place while Jammu and Kashmir has moved from 16th place in 1971 to the 17th place in 1981. Similarly, Pondicherry and Arunachal Pradesh which were 24th and 25th in rank in 1971 have exchanged ranks in 1981.

Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh together account for 34.04 per cent of the population or more than one third of the population of India is in these three States.

TABLE IV

Ranking of States/Union Territories by Population Size

Rank in 1981	States/Union Territories in order of population size	Population 1981	Percentage to total population of India 1981	Rank in 1971
1	2	3	4	5
	INDIA	683,810,051	100.00	
1.	Uttar Pradesh	110,858,019	16.21	1
2.	Bihar	69,823,154	10.21	2
3.	Maharashtra	62,693,898	9.17	3
4.	West Bengal	54,485,560	7.97	4
5.	Andhra Pradesh	53,403,619	7.81	5
6.	Madhya Pradesh	52,131,717	7.62	6
7.	Tamil Nadu	48,297,456	7.06	7
8.	Karnataka	37,043,451	5.42	8
9.	Rajasthan	34,102,912	4.99	10
10.	Gujarat	33,960,905	4.97	9
11.	Orissa	26,272,054	3.84	11
12.	Kerala	25,403,217	3.71	12
13.	Assam	19,902,826	2.91	13
14.	Punjab	16,669,755	2.44	14
15.	Haryana	12,850,902	1.88	15
16.	Delhi	6,196,414	0.91	17
17.	Jammu and Kashmir	5,981,600	0.87	16
18.	Himachal Pradesh	4,237,569	0.62	18

contd.....

TABLE IV (Contd.....)

1	2	3	4	5
19.	Tripura	2,060,189	0.30	19
20.	Manipur	1,433,691	0.21	20
21.	Meghalaya	1,327,874	0.19	21
22.	Goa, Daman & Diu	1,082,117	0.16	22
23.	Nagaland	773,281	0.11	23
24.	Arunachal Pradesh	628,050	0.09	25
25.	Pondicherry	604,136	0.09	24
26.	Mizoram	487,774	0.07	26
27.	Chandigarh	450,061	0.06	27
28.	Sikkim	315,682	0.05	28
29.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	188,254	0.03	29
30.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	103,677	0.02	30
31.	Lakshadweep	40,237	0.01	31

Growth Rate of Population:

Table V presents the absolute increase in population in the country and in the States and Union Territories in each of the decades 1961-71 and 1971-81. It also presents the percentage decadal growth rates of population for these decades (Fig.19).

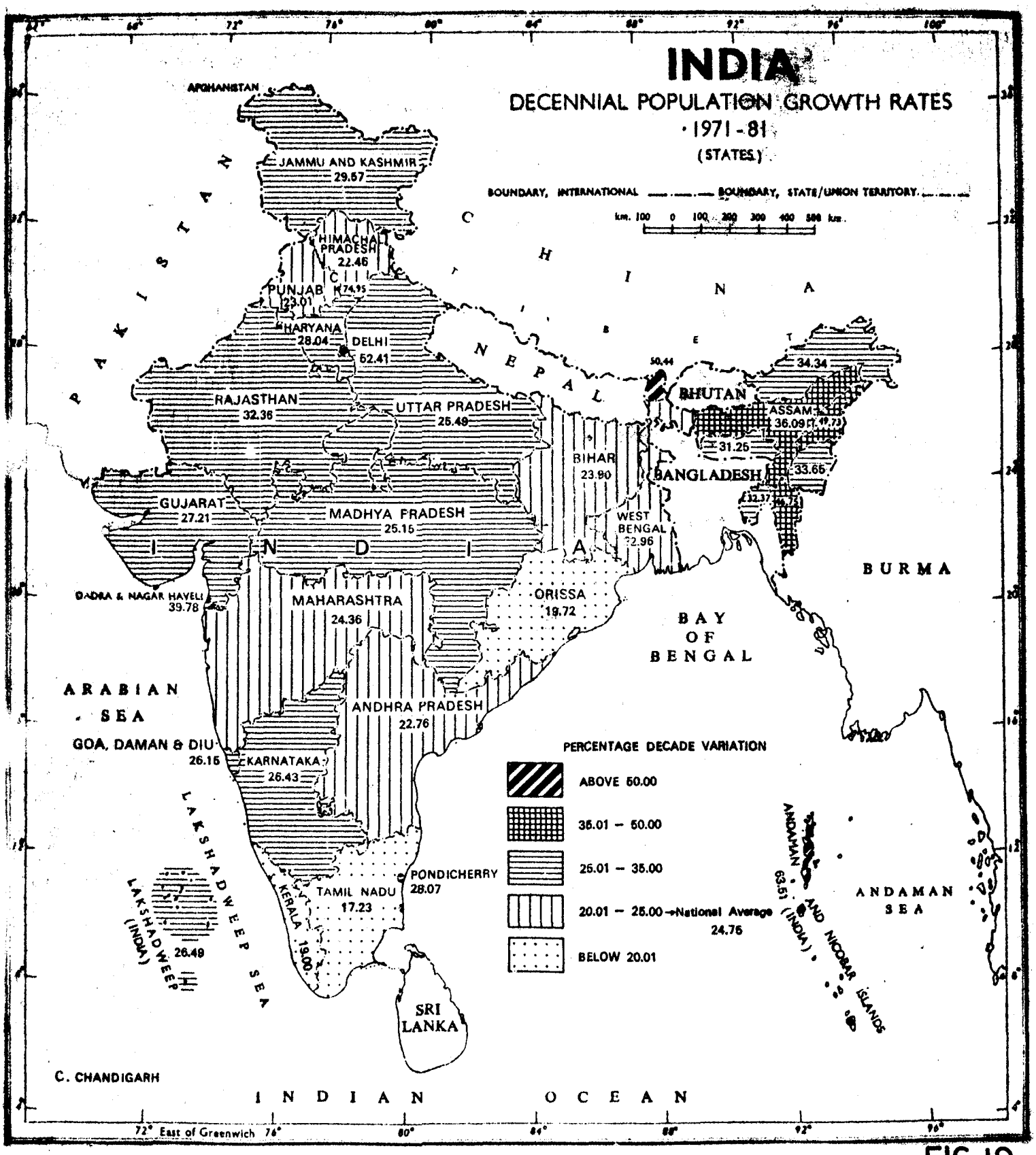

INDIA
DECENNIAL POPULATION GROWTH RATES
1971-81
(STATES)
BOUNDARY, INTERNATIONAL
BOUNDARY, STATE/UNION TERRITORY
km. 100 0 100 200 300 400 500 km.
AFGHANISTAN
JAMMU AND KASHMIR 29.67
HIMACHAL PRADESH 22.46
PUNJAB 23.01
HARYANA 28.04
DELHI 52.41
RAJASTHAN 32.36
UTTAR PRADESH 25.49
BIHAR 23.90
NEPAL
BHUTAN
ASSAM 36.09
31.25
BANGLADESH
33.65
WEST BENGAL 22.96
GUJARAT 27.21
MADHYA PRADESH 25.15
DADRA & NAGAR HAVELI 39.78
MAHARASHTRA 24.36
ORISSA 19.72
BURMA
BAY OF BENGAL
ARABIAN SEA
GOA, DAMAN & DIU 26.15
KARNATAKA 26.43
ANDHRA PRADESH 22.76
LAKSHADWEEP SEA
LAKSHADWEEP (INDIA) 26.49
KERALA 19.00
TAMIL NADU 17.23
PONDICHERRY 28.07
SRI LANKA
ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS (INDIA) 63.51
ANDAMAN SEA
PERCENTAGE DECADE VARIATION
ABOVE 50.00
35.01 – 50.00
25.01 – 35.00
20.01 – 25.00 →National Average 24.75
BELOW 20.01
C. CHANDIGARH
INDIAN OCEAN
72° East of Greenwich 76° 80° 84° 88° 92° 96°

FIG. 19

TABLE V

Absolute increase and per cent growth rate of population of States/Union Territories 1961-71 and 1971-81

S.No.	India/State/ Union Territory	Decadal Growth of Population		Percentage decadal Growth Rate	
		1961-71	1971-81	1961-71	1971-81
1	2	3	4	5	6
	INDIA	108,924,881	135,650,399	+24.80	+24.75
	States				
1.	Andhra Pradesh	7,519,261	9,900,911	+20.90	+22.76
2.	Assam	3,787,823	5,277,674	+34.95	+36.09
3.	Bihar	9,905,912	13,469,785	+21.33	+23.90
4.	Gujarat	6,064,125	7,263,430	+29.39	+27.21
5.	Haryana	2,446,265	2,814,094	+32.23	+28.04
6.	Himachal Pradesh	647,971	777,135	+23.04	+22.46
7.	Jammu and Kashmir	1,055,656	1,364,968	+29.65	+29.57
8.	Karnataka	5,712,242	7,744,437	+24.22	+26.43
9.	Kerala	4,443,660	4,055,842	+26.29	+19.00
10.	Madhya Pradesh	9,281,711	10,477,598	+28.67	+25.15
11.	Maharashtra	10,858,517	12,281,663	+27.45	+24.36
12.	Manipur	292,716	360,938	+37.53	+33.65
13.	Meghalaya	242,319	316,175	+31.50	+31.25
14.	Nagaland	147,249	256,832	+39.38	+49.73
15.	Orissa	4,395,769	4,327,439	+25.05	+19.72
16.	Punjab	2,415,991	3,118,695	+21.70	+23.01
17.	Rajasthan	5,610,204	8,337,106	+27.83	+32.36

contd.....

TABLE V (Contd.....)

1	2	3	4	5	6
18.	Sikkim	47,654	105,839	+29.38	+50.44
19.	Tamil Nadu	7,512,215	7,098,288	+22.30	+17.23
20.	Tripura	414,337	503,847	+36.28	+32.37
21.	Uttar Pradesh	14,586,590	22,516,875	+19.78	+25.49
22.	West Bengal	9,385,732	10,173,549	+26.37	+22.96
	Union Territories				
1.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	51,535	73,121	+81.17	+63.51
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	130,953	160,539	+38.91	+34.34
3.	Chandigarh	137,370	192,810	+114.59	+74.95
4.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	16,207	29,507	+27.96	+39.78
5.	Delhi	1,407,086	2,130,716	+52.93	+52.41
6.	Goa, Daman and Diu	231,104	224,346	+36.88	+26.15
7.	Lakshadweep	7,702	8,427	+31.95	+26.49
8.	Mizoram	66,327	155,384	+24.93	+46.75
9.	Pondicherry	102,628	132,429	+27.81	+28.07

The decadal growth rate of population in the country in the decade 1971-81 is 24.75 per cent which is slightly lower than the corresponding rate in the previous decade 1961-71. In absolute numbers, the addition during the decade 1971-81 in the country is of the order of 136 million. All the States and Union Territories have had an increase in population but at different rates, and except for a few areas, the addition in numbers between 1971 and 1981 is higher than that between 1961-71. It is only in the States of Kerala, Orissa, Tamil Nadu and in the Union Territory of Goa, Daman and Diu that the absolute increase in the decade 1971-81 is lower than that in the former decade. The decadal growth rates in these three States of Kerala, Orissa and Tamil Nadu have been much lower than in the other States.

While there is doubtless an absolute increase in most cases, it will be noticed from columns 5 and 6 of Table V that in quite a few States the percentage decadal growth rate in the decade 1971-81 has been lower than that in the decade 1961-71. This is so in the case of Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, West Bengal and in the Union Territories of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Delhi, Goa, Daman and Diu and

Lakshadweep. However, in the case of Himachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Delhi and Pondicherry the decadal growth rates in these two decades are almost equal, the difference being of the order of plus/minus one point. The decadal growth rate in the decade 1971-81 has been higher than the corresponding rate of the previous decade 1961-71 only in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Uttar Pradesh and in the Union Territories of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Mizoram. Incidentally on the basis of the projections in Assam, the decadal growth rate in the decade 1971-81 is higher than that in the decade 1961-71 while in the case of Jammu and Kashmir it is slightly less than that in the decade 1961-71. The absolute increase in the decade 1971-81 as compared with that during 1961-71 is particularly noticeable in the case of Bihar, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. In demographic terms, this is important.

General Pattern of Fertility:

India's fertility is higher as compared to the developed countries, but relatively lower than that of other developing countries. It is higher than the developed countries because of universality of marriage, lower age at marriage, limited use of contraceptives, low level of literacy, poor level of living of the masses and the traditional way of life among 80 per cent of the population.

Future Outlook:

The population of India is likely to reach one billion mark before the turn of the century. The population has grown because of a rapid fall in the death rate. In future it will depend more on the fall in the birth rate. Death rate which at present is around 14 is likely to fall to about 10 by 1991 or so. Further decline will be more difficult and is likely to take longer time. The critical factor in the growth of population will, therefore, be the birth rate. It is not easy to comprehend all the social, economic and political problems which India will have to face when it will be required to feed, clothe, educate and find employment for a population twice its present size. The success of the family planning programme, therefore, is of critical importance.

Thomas RobertMalthus disfavoured population growth and considered it to be the main cause of mass poverty. Modern writers repudiate the over-simplified arguments of Malthus, but agree with the proposition that population increase in some circumstances may hinder economic and social progress. For instance, shortage of land and other natural resources, of capital, and of trained and qualified manpower may make it difficult to balance expanding production with rapid population increase.

The present trends of population are such as to aggravate the existing inequality of numbers in relation to the means of production. Rapid rate of population growth combined with a rather narrow industrial base have resulted in excessive dependence of the population on agriculture. Relative abundance of labour encourages use of such methods of cultivation which require much labour to produce a small return. In some cases the workers are unable to keep themselves occupied on their little patches of land, and spend consequently a large part of each year in forced idleness. Population pressure and shortage of land sometimes lead to over-cropping and soil-exhaustion.

Density of Population:

In the provisional population Table XIII of 1981 the density of population per sq. km. in the country in the States and Union Territories has also been presented. The table also includes the corresponding figures relating to 1971. The density of population in the country is 221 persons per sq. km. as against 177 persons per sq. km. in 1971. For easy reference Table VI reproduces this data but in this table the States and Union Territories have been arranged in descending order of the 1981 density per sq. km.

TABLE VI

States and Union Territories arranged in descending order of density of population, 1981

Rank	State/Union Territory	Density of population per sq. km.	
		1981	1971
1	2	3	4
1.	Delhi	4,178	2,742
2.	Chandigarh	3,948	2,257
3.	Lakshadweep	1,257	994
4.	Pondicherry	1,228	959
5.	Kerala	654	549
6.	West Bengal	614	499
7.	Bihar	402	324
8.	Uttar Pradesh	377	300
9.	Tamil Nadu	371	317
10.	Punjab	331	269
11.	Haryana	291	227
12.	Goa, Daman and Diu	284	225
13.	Assam	254	186
14.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	211	151
15.	Maharashtra	204	164
16.	Tripura	196	148
17.	Andhra Pradesh	194	158
18.	Karnataka	193	153

contd.....

TABLE VI (Contd.....)

1	2	3	4
19.	Gujarat	173	136
20.	Orissa	169	141
21.	Madhya Pradesh	118	94
22.	Rajasthan	100	75
23.	Himachal Pradesh	76	62
24.	Manipur	64	48
25.	Meghalaya	59	45
26.	Nagaland	47	31
27.	Sikkim	44	30
28.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	23	14
29.	Mizoram	23	16
30.	Arunachal Pradesh	7	6

Union Territories of Delhi and Chandigarh have the highest densities in the country but these are in reality urban areas. Among the States, Kerala and West Bengal have the highest density (654 persons per sq. km.). These States are followed by Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Punjab all of which have density over 300 persons per sq. km. (Fig.20).

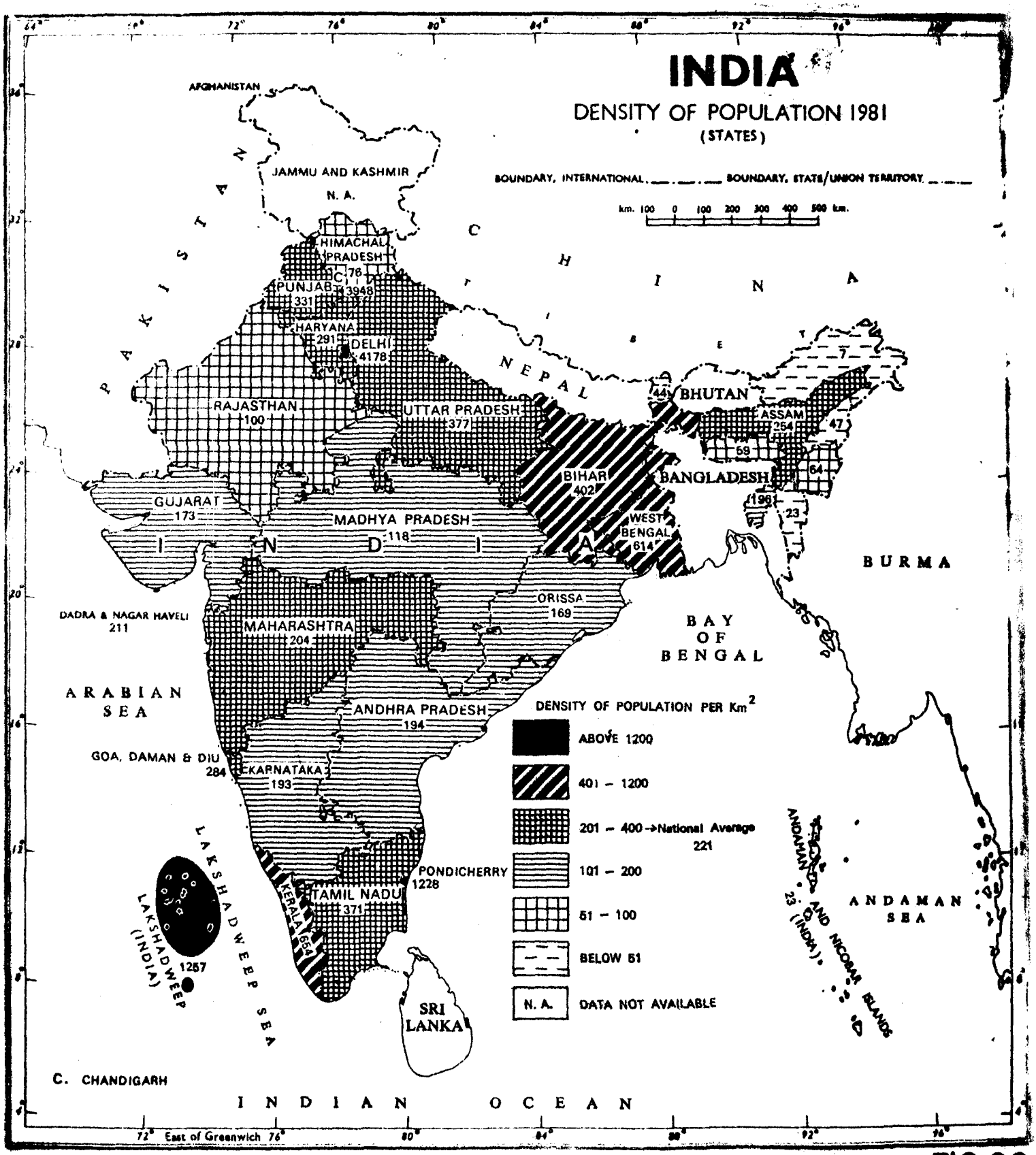

INDIA
DENSITY OF POPULATION 1981
(STATES)
BOUNDARY, INTERNATIONAL
BOUNDARY, STATE/UNION TERRITORY
km. 100 0 100 200 300 400 500 km.
AFGHANISTAN
PAKISTAN
JAMMU AND KASHMIR
N. A.
HIMACHAL PRADESH
78
CHINA
PUNJAB
331
CHANDIGARH
3948
HARYANA
291
DELHI
4178
NEPAL
RAJASTHAN
100
UTTAR PRADESH
377
BHUTAN
44
ASSAM
254
47
59
64
BIHAR
402
BANGLADESH
1961
23
GUJARAT
173
MADHYA PRADESH
118
WEST BENGAL
614
INDIA
BURMA
ORISSA
169
DADRA & NAGAR HAVELI
211
MAHARASHTRA
204
BAY OF BENGAL
ARABIAN SEA
ANDHRA PRADESH
194
GOA, DAMAN & DIU
284
KARNATAKA
193
LAKSHADWEEP SEA
LAKSHADWEEP (INDIA)
1257
PONDICHERRY
1228
TAMIL NADU
371
KERALA
654
SRI LANKA
ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS (INDIA)
23
ANDAMAN SEA
DENSITY OF POPULATION PER Km2
ABOVE 1200
401 – 1200
201 – 400 →National Average 221
101 – 200
51 – 100
BELOW 51
N. A. DATA NOT AVAILABLE
C. CHANDIGARH
INDIAN OCEAN
East of Greenwich

FIG. 20

Composition of Population

(a) Age Structure:

One of the consequences of high birth rate is that India has a very 'young population'. Nearly 42.0 per cent of India's population is below the age of 15 years and only 6.0 per cent of the population is aged 60 years and over.

(b) Sex Ratio:

The Provisional Population Table XIII of 1981 presents sex ratio of the population of India, States and Union Territories. The sex ratio is defined as the number of females per 1,000 males in the population. For purposes of comparison, this table also presents the sex ratios according to the 1971 census.

Table VII presents sex ratio in the country from 1901 to 1981.

TABLE VII

Sex ratio 1901 to 1981

Census year	Sex ratio
1901	972
1911	964
1921	955
1931	950
1941	945
1951	946
1961	941
1971	930
1981	935

The sex ratio has been generally adverse to women, i.e., the number of women per thousand men has generally been less than 1,000. It will also be noticed that the sex ratio has deteriorated over the decades. However, there is an apparent improvement in the sex ratio between 1971 and 1981 (Fig.21). The reason for the disparity in the sex ratio and the steady deterioration in the sex ratio are not quite clear. Explanations have been offered that there is a preference for male children resulting in neglect of female babies, that certain types of mortality are selective between males and females and that some part of the adverse sex ratio may be attributable to high maternal mortality. There is little evidence to support the view that there is a deliberate neglect of female babies despite the fact that there may be a preference for male children. This is an area of uncertainty and requires further investigation.

In Table VIII the States and Union Territories are arranged in descending order of sex ratio.

It will be noticed from Table VIII that Kerala has the highest sex ratio of 1,034 and is a solitary exception. In all the other States and Union Territories the sex ratio is adverse to women. However, in some of the States the sex ratio can be considered as comparatively

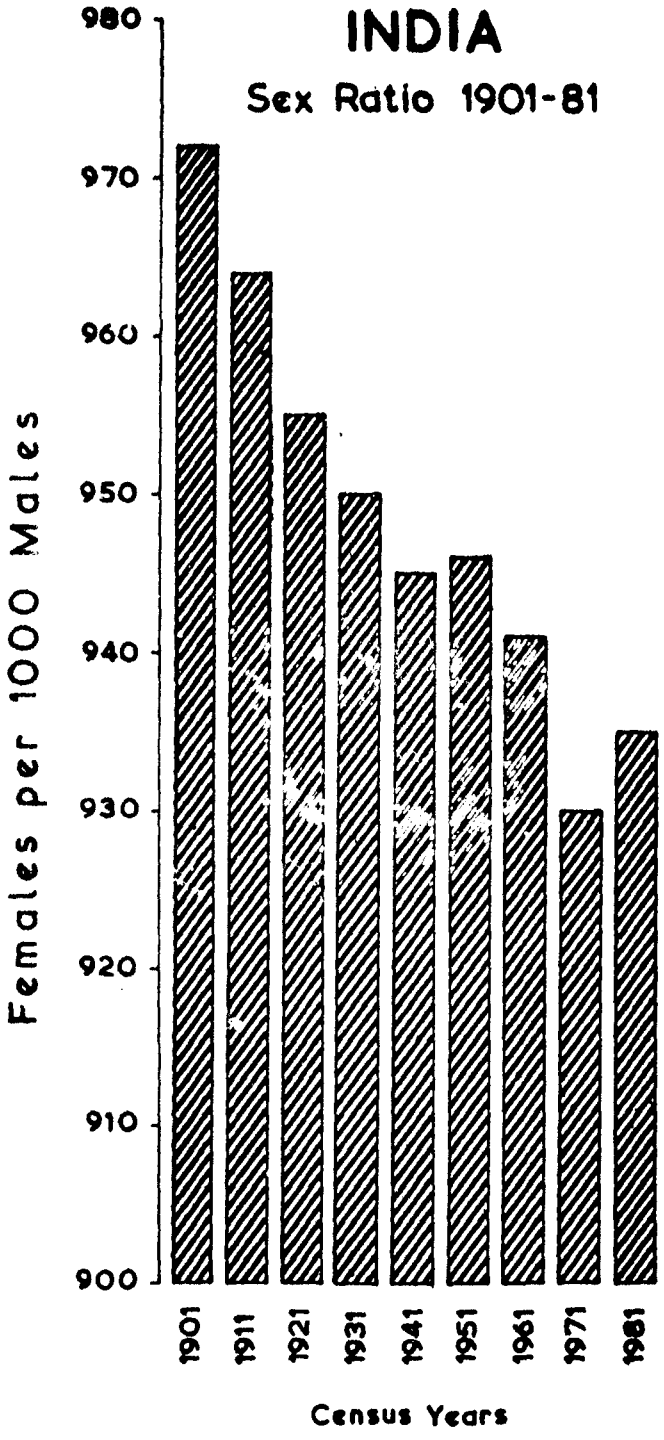

INDIA
Sex Ratio 1901-81
Females per 1000 Males
980
970
960
950
940
930
920
910
900
1901
1911
1921
1931
1941
1951
1961
1971
1981
Census Years

FIG. 21

TABLE VIII

States and Union Territories arranged in descending order of Sex Ratio, 1981

Rank	State/Union Territory	Sex ratio
1	2	3
1.	Kerala	1,034
2.	Himachal Pradesh	988
3.	Pondicherry	985
4.	Orissa	982
5.	Goa, Daman and Diu	981
6.	Tamil Nadu	978
7.	Lakshadweep	976
8.	Andhra Pradesh	975
9.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	974
10.	Manipur	972
11.	Karnataka	963
12.	Meghalaya	956
13.	Jammu and Kashmir	953
14.	Tripura	948
15.	Bihar	947
16.	Gujarat	942
17.	Madhya Pradesh	941
18.	Maharashtra	939

contd.....

TABLE VIII (Contd.....)

1	2	3
19.	Mizoram	936
20.	Rajasthan	921
21.	West Bengal	911
22.	Assam	900
23.	Uttar Pradesh	886
24.	Punjab	886
25.	Haryana	877
26.	Arunachal Pradesh	870
27.	Nagaland	867
28.	Sikkim	836
29.	Delhi	810
30.	Chandigarh	770
31.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	761

better. In particular, such States would be Himachal Pradesh, Orissa, Goa, Daman and Diu, Tamil Nadu, Lakshadweep, Andhra Pradesh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Manipur, Karnataka, Meghalaya and Jammu and Kashmir where the sex ratio is above 950. The all-India sex ratio is 935. Some of the major States such as Rajasthan, West Bengal, Assam, Uttar Pradesh, have sex ratio below the all-India average.

As mentioned earlier and as would have been noticed from Table VII the sex ratio in the country from 1901 to 1971 has been falling.

It is interesting to notice that certain States have had a fairly extended period where the sex ratio has been over one thousand, i.e., the sex ratio is in favour of females. In the case of Kerala, the sex ratio has been throughout above 1,000 , while in Manipur, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Goa, Daman and Diu, Lakshadweep and Mizoram it has been above 1,000 for a considerable part of the period 1901 to 1981. On the other hand, the sex ratio has been constantly on the low side in comparison with other States and Union Territories in Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Tripura, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh and Delhi. At this stage one would be reluctant to offer specific reasons for this phenomenon and this is an area, as mentioned earlier, of uncertainty which would merit more detailed consideration on the basis of further information. However, on the basis of common knowledge, one could attribute part of the constant low sex ratio in some of the States and Union Territories to observed events. For example, in the case of Haryana and Punjab, the depressed sex ratio can be attributed to large

scale male migration into these States consisting mostly of labourers. In particular, this is so in recent years. This would probably be true in the case of Andaman and Nicobar Islands also. Delhi and Chandigarh, being essentially urban areas, have had a constantly low sex ratio because of large scale immigration due to their being areas of high employment in administrative and commercial sectors. Kerala, on the other hand, has been a State which traditionally has exported male population who have left the State in search of employment and this is reflected in the sex ratio which is constantly favourable to women over the decades.

(c) Literacy:

Table IX presents the figures for the country at each census year. In working out these rates for 1981 the population of Assam and Jammu and Kashmir have been excluded as the census has not yet been taken there. The rates up to 1941 are for undivided India.

The literacy rates in the country have certainly improved over the decades. However, there is a clear differential between the literacy rates among males and females. Female literacy rates are falling behind male literacy rates. The implications of a low female literacy rate would call for further consideration. Quite apart

TABLE IX

Literacy 1901-1981

Year	Persons	Males	Females
1901	5.35	9.83	0.60
1911	5.92	10.56	1.05
1921	7.16	12.21	1.81
1931	9.50	16.59	2.93
1941	16.10	24.90	7.30
1951	16.67	24.95	7.93
1961	24.02	34.44	12.95
1971	29.45	39.45	18.69
1981	36.17	46.74	24.88

from the rates themselves, it would be relevant to briefly consider the absolute figures of literates also. This is relevant because while the literacy rates have certainly improved the total number of illiterates has continued to increase. The following figures would illustrate the point:

	Literates	Illiterates
1971	156,261,482 (161,415,010)	372,323,996 (386,744,642)
1981	237,991,932	445,818,119

The figures for 1971 exclude those for Assam and Jammu and Kashmir but for reference the country totals have been indicated in brackets. In comparing the figures for 1971 and 1981, the data of 1971 relating to these two States have been excluded.

It will be evident from these figures that while the number of literates has no doubt increased by about 82 million over the decade 1971-81, we have added about 48 million to the stock of illiterates. This would include, as mentioned earlier, very young children below the age of 5 years but even taking this fact into account the decadal increase in the physical numbers of illiterates would merit attention.

Table X arranges the States and Union Territories in descending order of literacy rate as recorded at the 1981 census. The Table also indicates the corresponding rates of the 1971 census, the percentage increase in literacy and ranks which the States held with regard to literacy rates in 1971.

If one ignores Chandigarh which in reality is a highly urbanised area, among the States it will be noticed that Kerala has a pre-eminent position with regard to literacy and held this position both in 1971 and 1981.

TABLE X

States/Union Territories arranged in the order of literacy ranking in 1981 census and comparison with 1971 census

Ranking in 1981	State/Union Territory	Literacy rate 1981	Literacy rate 1971	Ranking in 1971	Percentage increase of literacy
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Kerala	69.17	60.42	2	+14.48
2.	Chandigarh	64.68	61.56	1	+ 5.07
3.	Delhi	61.06	55.61	3	+ 9.80
4.	Mizoram	59.50	53.79	4	+10.90
5.	Goa, Daman and Diu	55.86	44.75	6	+24.83
6.	Lakshadweep	54.72	43.66	7	+25.33
7.	Pondicherry	54.23	46.02	5	+17.84
8.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	51.27	43.59	8	+17.82
9.	Maharashtra	47.37	39.18	10	+20.90
10.	Tamil Nadu	45.78	39.46	9	+16.02
11.	Gujarat	43.75	35.79	11	+22.24
12.	Manipur	41.99	32.91	14	+27.59
13.	Nagaland	41.99	27.40	19	+53.25
14.	Himachal Pradesh	41.94	31.96	15	+31.23
15.	Tripura	41.58	30.98	17	+34.22
16.	West Bengal	40.88	33.20	13	+23.13
17.	Punjab	40.74	33.67	12	+21.00

contd.....

TABLE X (Contd.....)

1	2	3	4	5	6
18.	Karnataka	38.41	31.52	16	+21.86
19.	Haryana	35.84	26.89	20	+33.28
20.	Orissa	34.12	26.18	21	+30.33
21.	Sikkim	33.83	17.74	27	+90.70
22.	Meghalaya	33.22	29.49	18	+12.65
23.	Andhra Pradesh	29.94	24.57	22	+21.86
24.	Madhya Pradesh	27.82	22.14	23	+25.65
25.	Uttar Pradesh	27.38	21.70	24	+26.18
26.	Dadar & Nagar Haveli	26.60	14.97	28	+77.69
27.	Bihar	26.01	19.94	25	+30.44
28.	Rajasthan	24.05	19.07	26	+26.11
29.	Arunachal Pradesh	20.09	11.29	29	+77.95

It is encouraging to notice that there has been a steady increase in literacy in the country (Fig.22).

Table XI indicates the distribution of States and Union Territories by three ranges of female literacy, namely, those with a female literacy rate of 50 per cent and above, those with a female literacy rate between 25 and 50 per cent and those with a female literacy rate below 25 per cent. The statement also indicates percentage increase of females literacy in the decade 1971-81.

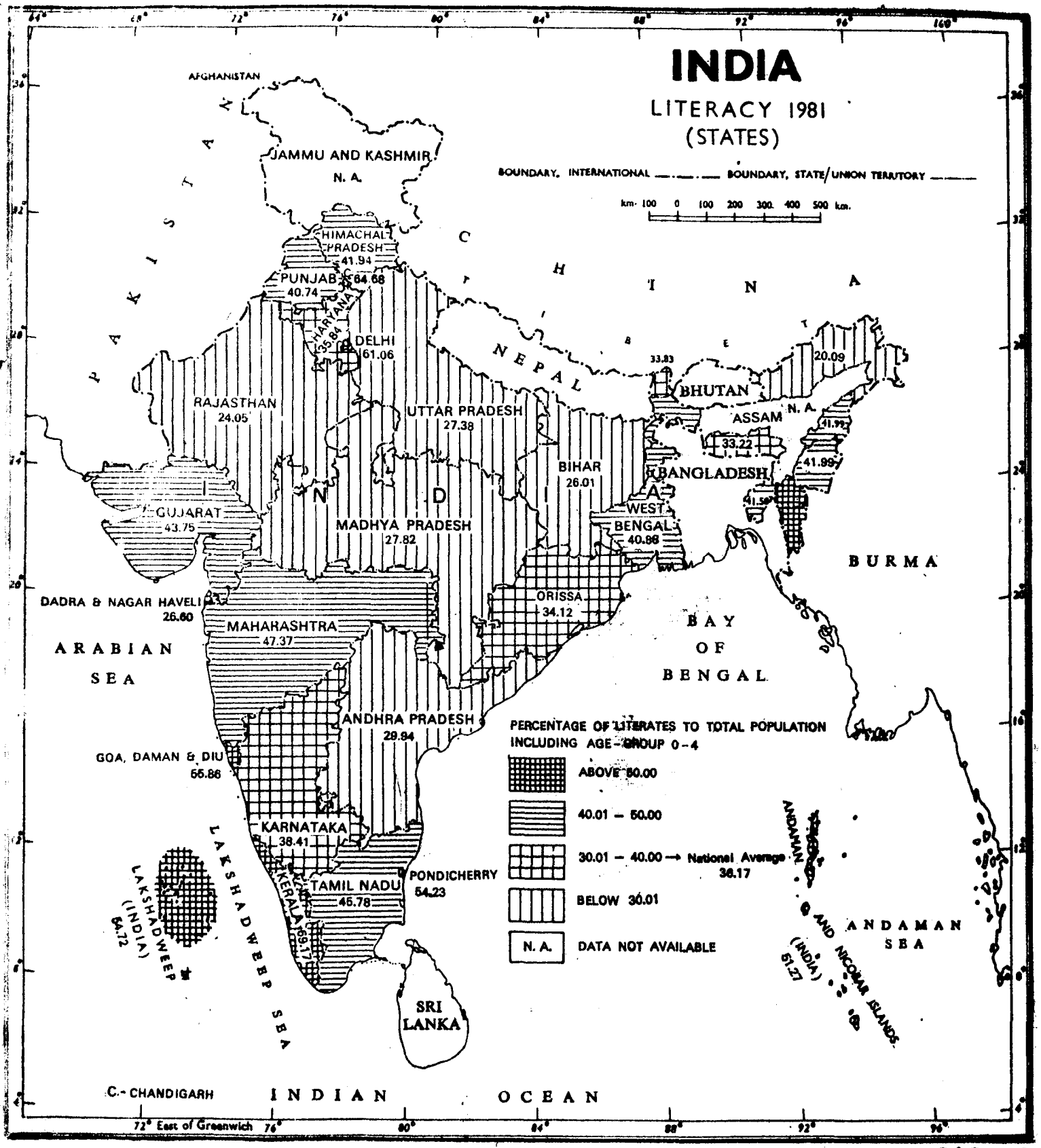

INDIA
LITERACY 1981
(STATES)
BOUNDARY, INTERNATIONAL
BOUNDARY, STATE/UNION TERRITORY
km. 100 0 100 200 300 400 500 km.
AFGHANISTAN
PAKISTAN
JAMMU AND KASHMIR
N. A.
HIMACHAL PRADESH
41.94
PUNJAB
64.68
40.74
HARYANA
55.84
DELHI
61.06
RAJASTHAN
24.05
UTTAR PRADESH
27.38
NEPAL
CHINA
TIBET
33.83
20.09
BHUTAN
N. A.
ASSAM
33.22
41.99
BANGLADESH
41.99
41.58
BIHAR
26.01
WEST BENGAL
40.86
GUJARAT
43.75
MADHYA PRADESH
27.82
BURMA
DADRA & NAGAR HAVELI
26.60
ORISSA
34.12
MAHARASHTRA
47.37
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BENGAL
ANDHRA PRADESH
29.94
GOA, DAMAN & DIU
55.86
KARNATAKA
38.41
KERALA
69.17
TAMIL NADU
45.78
PONDICHERRY
54.23
LAKSHADWEEP (INDIA)
64.72
LAKSHADWEEP SEA
ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS (INDIA)
61.27
ANDAMAN SEA
SRI LANKA
C.- CHANDIGARH
INDIAN OCEAN
72° East of Greenwich
PERCENTAGE OF LITERATES TO TOTAL POPULATION
INCLUDING AGE-GROUP 0-4
ABOVE 50.00
40.01 – 50.00
30.01 – 40.00 → National Average 36.17
BELOW 30.01
N. A. DATA NOT AVAILABLE

FIG.22

TABLE XI

Distribution of States and Union Territories by different ranges of female literacy

State/Union Territory	Per cent female literates	Percentage increase of female literacy 1971-81
1	2	3
FEMALE LITERACY 50% AND ABOVE		
Kerala	64.48	18.73
Chandigarh	59.30	9.11
Mizoram	52.57	12.55
Delhi	52.56	10.07
FEMALE LITERACY 25% - 50%		
Goa, Daman and Diu	46.78	33.31
Pondicherry	44.30	27.96
Lakshadweep	44.21	44.67
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	41.85	34.52
Maharashtra	35.08	32.73
Punjab	34.14	31.81
Tamil Nadu	34.12	27.03
Nagaland	33.72	80.80
Gujarat	32.31	30.55
Tripura	31.60	49.13

contd.....

TABLE XI (Contd.....)

1	2	3
Himachal Pradesh	31.39	55.17
Manipur	30.69	57.14
West Bengal	30.33	35.28
Meghalaya	29.28	19.22
Karnataka	27.83	32.71
FEMALE LITERACY LESS THAN 25%		
Haryana	22.23	49.29
Sikkim	22.07	147.98
Orissa	21.11	51.65
Andhra Pradesh	20.52	30.29
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	16.75	113.65
Madhya Pradesh	15.54	42.31
Uttar Pradesh	14.42	36.68
Bihar	13.58	55.73
Rajasthan	11.32	33.81
Arunachal Pradesh	11.02	197.04

TABLE XII

Progress of female literacy, 1901-1981

Year	Number of literates		Literate males per 100 literate females
	Males	Females	
1901	11,870,758	809,580	1466
1911	13,552,737	1,298,484	1043
1021	15,690,428	2,221,499	1208
1931	22,274,035	3,977,034	560
1941	NA	NA	NA
1951	46,272,335	13,916,683	332
1961	77,906,038	27,565,962	283
1971	112,012,994	49,423,270	227
1981	158,837,215*	79,154,717*	201

'NA' stands for not available.

* Excludes Assam and Jammu and Kashmir.

It is interesting to notice that till the 1920's female literacy was considerably below male literacy with a ratio of nearly 1:10 in favour of males. Thereafter, there has been a clear improvement in famales literacy but in 1971 it will be noticed that for every 100 literate females there were still approximately double the number of literate males. In 1981 the provisional results indicate that for every 100 literate females there were 201 literate

TABLE XIII

Provisional Population Table - 1981

Distribution of population, sex ratio, growth rate and population in States/Union Territories

S.No.	India/State/ Union Territory	Population, 1981			Sex, ratio, i.e. females per 1000 males		Density of population per. sq.km.		Decennial growth rate of population	
		Persons	Males	Females	1971	1981	1971	1981	1961-71	1971-81
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	INDIA	683810051	353347249	330462802	930	935	177*	221*	+24.80	+24.75
	States									
1.	Andhra Pradesh	53403619	27035531	26368088	977	975	158	194	+20.90	+22.76
2.	Assam	19902826	10472712	9430114	896	900	186	254	+34.95	+36.09
3.	Bihar	69823154	35865467	33957687	954	947	324	402	+21.33	+23.90
4.	Gujarat	33960905	17484540	16476365	934	942	136	173	+29.39	+27.21
5.	Haryana	12850902	6846153	6004749	867	877	227	291	+32.23	+28.04
6.	Himachal Pradesh	4237569	2131312	2106257	958	988	62	76	+23.04	+22.46
7.	Jammu and Kashmir	5981600	3062200	2919400	878	953	NA	NA	+29.65	+29.57
8.	Karnataka	37043451	18869494	18173957	957	963	153	193	+24.22	+26.43
9.	Kerala	25403217	12487961	12915256	1016	1034	549	654	+26.29	+19.00
10.	Madhya Pradesh	52131717	26856752	25274965	941	941	94	118	+28.67	+25.15

contd.....

TABLE XIII (Contd.....)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
11.	Maharashtra	62693898	32341115	30352783	930	939	164	204	+27.45	+24.36
12.	Manipur	1433691	727108	706583	980	972	48	64	+37.53	+33.65
13.	Meghalaya	1327874	678883	648991	942	956	45	59	+31.50	+31.25
14.	Nagaland	773281	414231	359050	871	867	31	47	+39.88	+49.73
15.	Orissa	26272054	13253523	13018531	988	982	141	169	+25.05	+19.72
16.	Punjab	16669755	8840234	7829521	865	886	269	331	+21.70	+23.01
17.	Rajasthan	34102912	17749282	16353630	911	921	75	100	+27.83	+32.36
18.	Sikkim	315682	171959	143723	863	836	30	44	+29.38	+50.44
19.	Tamil Nadu	48297456	24420228	23877228	978	978	317	371	+22.30	+17.23
20.	Tripura	2060189	1057714	1002475	943	948	148	196	+36.28	+32.37
21.	Uttar Pradesh	110858019	58780640	52077379	879	886	300	377	+19.78	+25.49
22.	West Bengal	54485560	28505151	25980409	891	911	499	614	+26.87	+22.96

contd.....

TABLE XIII (Contd.....)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	Union Territories									
1.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	188254	106889	81365	644	761	14	23	+81.17	+63.51
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	628050	335941	292109	861	870	6	7	+38.91	+34.34
3.	Chandigarh	450061	254208	195853	749	770	2257	3948	+114.59	+74.95
4.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	103677	52514	51163	1007	974	151	211	+27.96	+39.73
5.	Delhi	6196414	3422550	2773864	801	810	2742	4178	+52.93	+52.41
6.	Goa, Daman & Diu	1082117	546260	535857	989	981	225	284	+36.88	+26.15
7.	Lakshadweep	40237	20367	19870	978	976	994	1257	+31.95	+26.49
8.	Mizoram	487774	251 988	235786	946	936	16	23	+24.93	+46.75
9.	Pondicherry	604136	304342	299794	989	985	959	1228	+27.81	+28.07

* While working out the density of India, Jammu and Kashmir has been excluded as comparable figures of area and population are not available for that State.

'NA' stands for not available.

males. Though the disparity between literate females and males continued to persist the fact that the gap is tending to fill is encouraging.

Nature of Population

(a) Rural-Urban Population:

India's urban population as recorded at the 1981 census, excluding Assam and Jammu and Kashmir, is 156,188,507 i.e., 23.73 per cent of the total population of the country. Per-contra this would mean that 76.27 per cent of the population is rural. Table XIV indicates the trend in urbanization of the country from 1901 onwards. The steadily increasing urban population and the increase in the proportion of urban population, decade to decade, is clearly noticeable from Fig.23. In itself, the proportion of urban population cannot be considered to be very high and it would be true to say that by and large India continues to be predominantly rural. However, what is more important would be the addition to urban population in each decade. In the decade 1971-81 the urban population has increased by 49,221,973 or by more than 49 million. The physical numbers seem of greater importance because these numbers when analysed in conjunction with their distribution in towns by size class, would have implications with regard to the provision of basic municipal and other services including water supply and housing.

INDIA

GROWTH OF URBAN POPULATION
1901-81

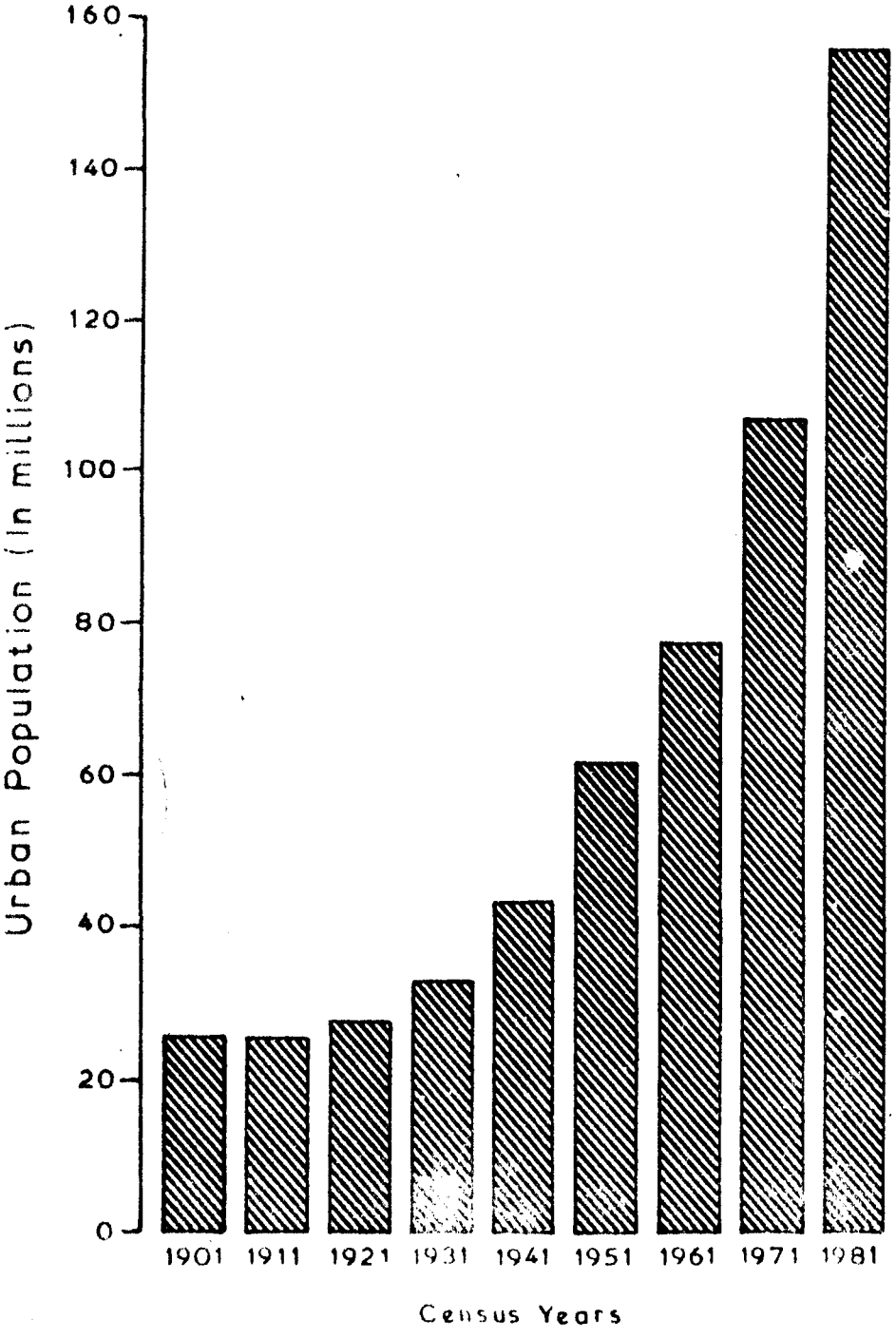


FIG. 23

TABLE XIV

Trend of urbanization in India*

Census Year	Total population	Urban population	Urban population as per cent to total population
1901	232,967,285	25,616,051	11.00
1911	245,952,238	25,580,199	10.40
1921	244,259,874	27,691,306	11.34
1931	270,746,659	32,976,018	12.18
1941	309,019,062	43,558,665	14.10
1951	349,605,382	61,629,646**	17.62
1961	424,836,466	77,562,000	18.26
1971	528,917,868	106,966,534	20.22
1981	658,140,676	156,188,507	23.73

* Excludes Assam and Jammu and Kashmir.
**Excludes a population of 12,019 of Kanchrapara Rural Development Colony in West Bengal, the figures for which could not be assigned to any size class.

The urban population in the country according to the provisional results is 156,188,507. As mentioned, throughout this analysis the population of Assam and Jammu and Kashmir including their urban components have been excluded. However, it may be noted that if the urban population of these two States according to projections are

included, the urban population of the country would be of the order of 159 million. If one were to compare this figure with the urban population as recorded at the 1971 census the growth rate of urban population in 1971-81 would be 46.14 but if one were to exclude these two States the urban growth rate in this decade would be 46.02 per cent. Again, if one were to include the projections of urban population in these two States, the proportion of urban population would be 23.73 per cent.

Table XV indicates the rural-urban composition of the population of the country, the States and Union Territories.

The States and Union Territories have a wide range of urban growth rates in 1971-81. Mizoram with an urban growth rate of 225.13 per cent has the highest rate while Tamil Nadu with 27.78 per cent is the lowest. Such a comparison, however, would not be appropriate because high growth rates in the case of certain States and Union Territories are arithmetical consequences of either small population base or additions of new towns etc.

TABLE XV

Rural-Urban composition of population, 1981

S.No.	India/State/ Union Territory	Population 1981			Urban population as per cent to total population 1981	Decennial growth rate 1971-81		
		Total	Rural	Urban		Total	Rural	Urban
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	INDIA*	658140676	501952169	156188507	23.73	+24.43	+18.96	+46.02
	States							
1.	Andhra Pradesh	53592605	41134896	12457709	23.25	+23.19	+17.19	+48.26
2.	Bihar	69823154	61124141	8699013	12.46	+23.90	+20.51	+54.40
3.	Gujarat	33960905	23404474	10556431	31.08	+27.21	+21.89	+40.82
4.	Haryana	12850902	10029073	2821829	21.96	+28.04	+21.36	+59.16
5.	Himachal Pradesh	4237569	3910407	327162	7.72	+22.46	+21.50	+35.25
6.	Karnataka	37043451	26332348	10711103	28.91	+26.43	+18.74	+50.39
7.	Kerala	25403217	20632288	4770929	18.78	+19.00	+15.39	+37.63
8.	Madhya Pradesh	52138467	41549814	10588653	20.31	+25.17	+19.16	+56.07
9.	Maharashtra	62715300	40748494	21966806	35.03	+24.40	+17.43	+39.82

contd.....

TABLE XV (Contd.....)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10.	Manipur	1411375	1038160	373215	26.44	+31.57	+11.48	+163.77
11.	Meghalaya	1328343	1088842	239501	18.03	+31.30	+25.95	+62.74
12.	Nagaland	773281	653101	120180	15.54	+49.73	+40.44	+133.84
13.	Orissa	26272054	23166419	3105635	11.82	+19.72	+15.26	+68.29
14.	Punjab	16569755	12049260	4620495	27.72	+23.01	+16.59	+43.56
15.	Rajasthan	34108292	26967871	7140421	20.93	+32.38	+27.07	+57.15
16.	Sikkim	314999	263889	51110	16.23	+50.11	+38.76	+159.86
17.	Tamil Nadu	48297456	32369504	15927952	32.98	+17.23	+12.65	+27.78
18.	Tripura	2047351	1822470	224881	10.98	+31.55	+30.74	+38.51
19.	Uttar Pradesh	110885874	90912651	19973223	18.01	+25.52	+19.70	+61.22
20.	West Bengal	54485560	40052074	14433486	26.49	+22.96	+20.11	+31.61

contd.....

TABLE XV (Contd.....)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	Union Territories							
1.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	188254	138622	49632	26.36	+63.51	+55.90	+89.31
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	628050	588335	39715	6.32	+34.34	+30.68	+129.73
3.	Chandigarh	450061	28805	421256	93.60	+74.95	+18.49	+80.84
4.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	103677	96763	6914	6.67	+39.78	+30.46	--
5.	Delhi	6196414	443876	5752538	92.84	+52.41	+ 6.02	+57.73
6.	Goa, Daman and Diu	1082117	730882	351235	32.46	+26.15	+15.83	+54.88
7.	Lakshadweep	40237	21604	18633	46.31	+26.49	-32.08	--
8.	Mizoram	487774	365009	122765	25.17	+46.75	+23.89	+225.13
9.	Pondicherry	604182	288097	316085	52.32	+28.08	+ 5.37	+59.41

*Excludes Assam and Jammu and Kashmir.

Generally it may be noted that urban growth rates are fairly impressive. For the first time Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Lakshadweep have had urban units and, therefore, can be said to have entered the stream of urbanization for the first time. One important point in relation to urban growth rates would have to be a detailed consideration of the components of these growth rates. There are two clear components. The first would be the growth of population in already existing urban units while the second component would relate to the shift of population from rural to urban because of new places being classified as urban on account of their satisfying the criteria for urbanization.

Table XVI provides comparative data on urban population of the country and for each State and Union Territory as recorded at the 1971 and 1981 censuses.

At the 1971 census 20.22 per cent of India's population lived in urban areas and this proportion has increased to 23.73 per cent by 1981. In all the States and Union Territories, the proportion of urban population has increased between 1971 and 1981 (Fig.24).

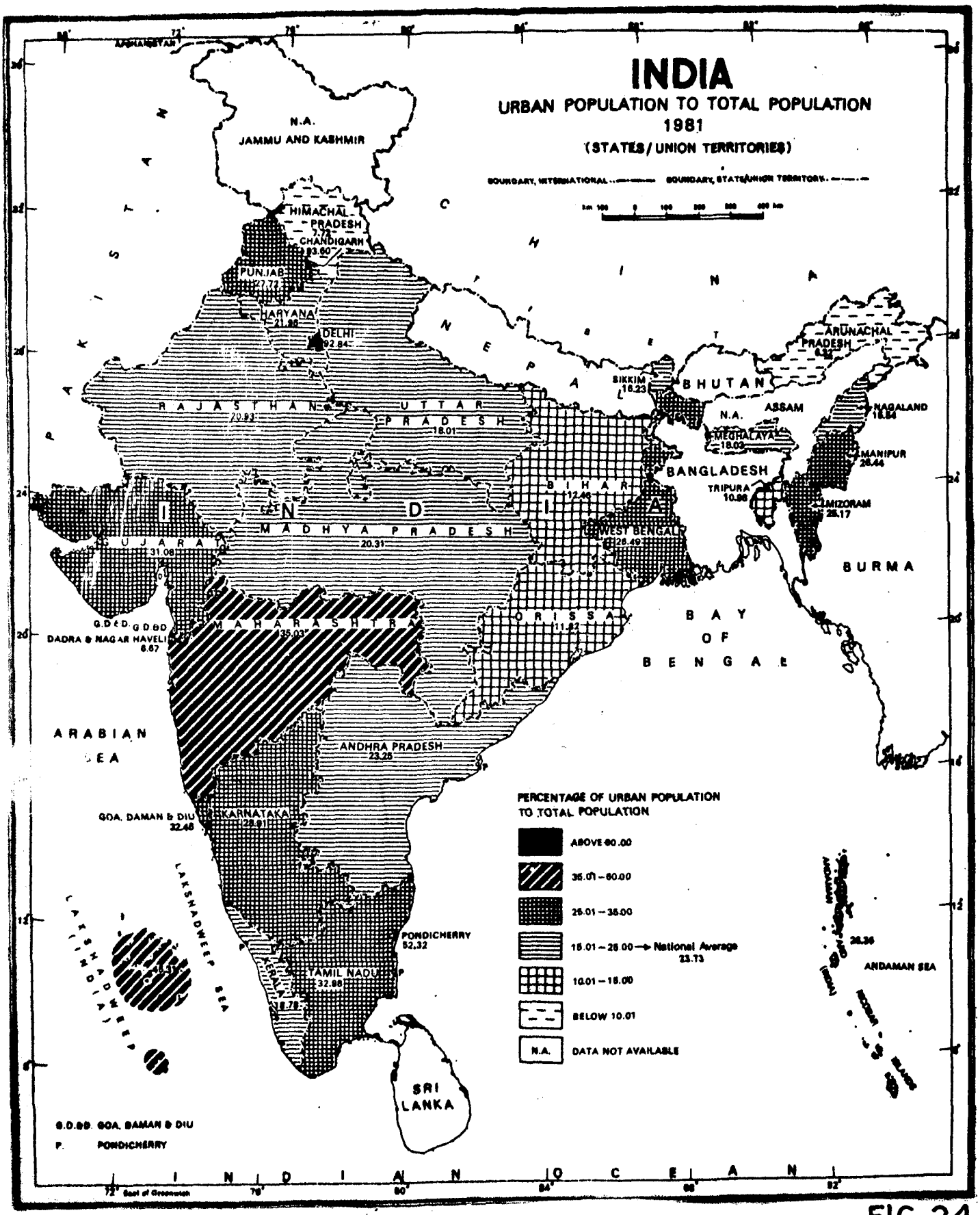

INDIA
URBAN POPULATION TO TOTAL POPULATION
1981
(STATES / UNION TERRITORIES)
BOUNDARY, INTERNATIONAL
BOUNDARY, STATE/UNION TERRITORY
N.A.
JAMMU AND KASHMIR
HIMACHAL PRADESH
7.71
CHANDIGARH
83.60
PUNJAB
27.72
HARYANA
21.96
DELHI
92.84
RAJASTHAN
20.93
UTTAR PRADESH
18.01
SIKKIM
16.23
BHUTAN
ARUNACHAL PRADESH
N.A.
ASSAM
NAGALAND
18.84
MEGHALAYA
18.03
MANIPUR
26.44
TRIPURA
10.96
MIZORAM
28.17
BANGLADESH
BIHAR
12.46
WEST BENGAL
26.49
BURMA
MADHYA PRADESH
20.31
GUJARAT
31.08
D.D & D.D
DADRA & NAGAR HAVELI
6.67
MAHARASHTRA
35.03
ORISSA
11.82
BAY OF BENGAL
ARABIAN SEA
ANDHRA PRADESH
23.28
GOA, DAMAN & DIU
32.46
KARNATAKA
28.91
LAKSHADWEEP SEA
PONDICHERRY
52.32
TAMIL NADU
32.86
8.78
SRI LANKA
ANDAMAN SEA
26.36
PERCENTAGE OF URBAN POPULATION TO TOTAL POPULATION
ABOVE 50.00
35.01 – 50.00
25.01 – 35.00
15.01 – 25.00 → National Average 23.73
10.01 – 15.00
BELOW 10.01
N.A. DATA NOT AVAILABLE
D.D.&D. GOA, DAMAN & DIU
P. PONDICHERRY
INDIAN OCEAN

FIG. 24

TABLE XVI

Urban population in States and Union Territories, 1971-81

S.No.	India/State/Union Territory	Total population	1971		1981		
			Urban population	Urban population as per cent to total population	Total population	Urban population	Urban population as per cent to total population
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	INDIA	528917868	106966534	20.22	658140676	156188507	23.73
	States						
1.	Andhra Pradesh	43502708	8402527	19.31	53592605	12457709	23.25
2.	Bihar	56353369	5633966	10.00	69823154	8699013	12.46
3.	Gujarat	26697475	7496500	28.08	33960905	10556431	31.08
4.	Haryana	10036808	1772959	17.66	12850902	2821829	21.96
5.	Himachal Pradesh	3460434	241890	6.99	4237569	327162	7.72
6.	Karnataka	29299014	7122093	24.31	37043451	10711103	28.91
7.	Kerala	21347375	3466449	16.24	25403217	4770929	18.78
8.	Madhya Pradesh	41654119	6784767	16.29	52138467	10588653	20.31

contd.....

TABLE XVI (Contd.....)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9.	Maharashtra	50412235	15711211	31.17	62715300	21966806	35.03
10.	Manipur	1072753	141492	13.19	1411375	373215	26.44
11.	Meghalaya	1011699	147170	14.55	1328343	239501	18.03
12.	Nagaland	516449	51394	9.95	773281	120180	15.54
13.	Orissa	21944615	1845395	8.41	26272054	3105635	11.82
14.	Punjab	13551060	3216179	23.73	16669755	4620495	27.72
15.	Rajasthan	25765806	4543761	17.63	34108292	7140421	20.93
16.	Sikkim	209843	19668	9.37	314999	51110	16.23
17.	Tamil Nadu	41199168	12464834	30.26	48297456	15927952	32.98
18.	Tripura	1556342	162360	10.43	2047351	224881	10.98
19.	Uttar Pradesh	88341144	12388596	14.02	110885874	19973223	18.01
20.	West Bengal	44312011	10967033	24.75	54485560	14433486	26.49

contd.....

TABLE XVI (Contd.....)

1.	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Union Territories						
1.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	115133	26218	22.77	188254	49632	26.36
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	467511	17288	3.70	628050	39715	6.32
3.	Chandigarh	257251	232940	90.55	450061	421256	93.60
4.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	74170	--	--	103677	6914	6.67
5.	Delhi	4065698	3647023	89.70	6196414	5752538	92.84
6.	Goa, Daman and Diu	857771	226774	26.44	1082117	351235	32.46
7.	Lakshadweep	31810	--	--	40237	18633	46.31
8.	Mizoram	332390	37759	11.36	487774	122765	25.17
9.	Pondicherry	471707	198288	42.04	604182	316085	52.32

(b) Religious Composition of Population:

According to the 1971 census 82.72 per cent of the India's population belonged to the Hindu religion and 11.21 per cent to the Muslim religion. The percentage of the Christian and the Sikh was 2.60 and 1.89 respectively (Table XVII).

TABLE XVII

Religious break-up of population*

Major religious communities	Population	Percentage to total population	Percentage increase in 1961-71
Hindus	453,292,086	82.72	25.69
Muslims	61,417,934	11.21	30.85
Christians	14,223,382	2.60	32.60
Sikhs	10,378,797	1.89	32.28
Buddhists	3,812,325	0.70	17.20
Jains	2,604,646	0.47	28.48
Scheduled Castes	79,995,896	14.60	24.18
Scheduled Tribes	38,015,162	6.93	27.23

*Figures for religious break-up of population for 1981 have not yet been published by the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India. So, the figures for 1971 Census have been used.

II. SOCIAL CONFLICTS AND CLEAVAGES

Apart from its tribal areas, India has a deep-rooted cultural tradition, which is shared by most of its people and also in large part by the people of Pakistan. Yet this cultural heritage was never translated into a widespread consciousness of nationhood until the nationalist movement of the present century. It would appear that despite its initial advantages and the highly successful functioning of its government immediately after Independence, India is still to become an integrated and consolidated nation. The main obstaclesare, of course, the wide social and economic cleavages among its people and the accompanying inequalities of welfare and opportunity. Here, we shall examine social conflicts and cleavages mainly at three levels, namely, (a) language, (b) religion and castcism, and (c) regionalism.

(a) Language

The vastness of the country and varied nature of population character have resulted in multiplicity of languages in India (Fig.25). After independence the country was reorganized into fourteen states, each of which had a clearly dominant language except Greater Bombay, which was bilingual state, and Punjab, where the principal languages

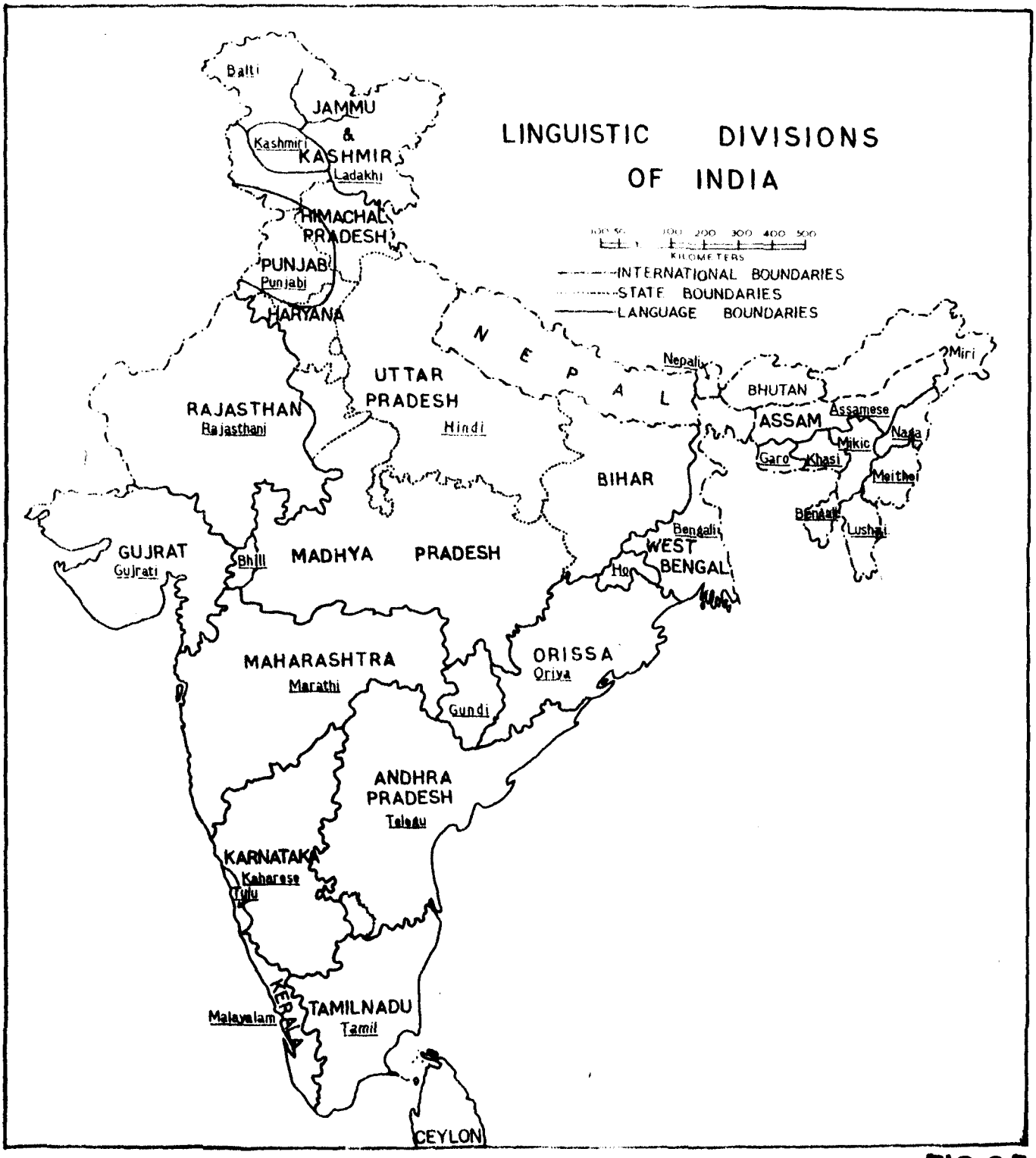

LINGUISTIC DIVISIONS
OF INDIA
KILOMETERS
INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARIES
STATE BOUNDARIES
LANGUAGE BOUNDARIES
Balti
JAMMU
&
KASHMIR
Kashmiri
Ladakhi
HIMACHAL
PRADESH
PUNJAB
Punjabi
HARYANA
UTTAR
PRADESH
Hindi
RAJASTHAN
Rajasthani
NEPAL
Nepali
BHUTAN
ASSAM
Assamese
Miri
Naga
Mikic
Garo
Khasi
Meithei
Bengali
Lushai
BIHAR
WEST
BENGAL
Bengali
Hor
GUJRAT
Gujrati
Bhili
MADHYA PRADESH
MAHARASHTRA
Marathi
ORISSA
Oriya
Gundi
ANDHRA
PRADESH
Telegu
KARNATAKA
Kanarese
Tulu
KERALA
Malayalam
TAMILNADU
Tamil
CEYLON

FIG.25

were, however, all associated with Hindi. Agitations and violence in Greater Bombay later led to its bifurcation into the states of Gujarat and Maharashtra.

Much the same considerations have bedevilled a solution of the national language problem. The constitution declared originally that Hindi would replace English as the official language of the Indian Union after fifteen years.[2] But the non-Hindi southern regions of the country and also the eastern ones, particularly Bengal, showed a marked reluctance, if not active resistance, to learning Hindi.[3] At the root of this particular controversy lies the resentment of southerners against the alleged hold of northerners on the nation's political and economic affairs.

The diversity of the languages in any country enriches its cultural setting but often engenders some social and political strains in the body politic. The numerousity of spoken and written languages and dialects in India (some 500 million persons speaking as many as 200 distinct related and unrelated dialects) is one of the geopolitical problems of considerable magnitude.

The Indian National Congress, about fifty years back, when it was still waging the struggle for national independence, had realized that there were major discrepancies in the territorial organization of the "provinces" of India;

it had then committed itself to a policy of linguistic reorganization of the states. After the achievement of independence in 1947, the government partly to honour its commitments and partly forced by the incessant and clamorous demands from sections of public appointed a commission to examine the problem of linguistic reorganization of the states. Although the recommendations made by the Commission were generally accepted and implemented by the government, not all the regional demands could be satisfied and there were several instances where such demands took violent forms.

Of the two hundred and odd languages and dialects in India, there are fifteen which have been recognized as major languages under Schedule VIII of the Constitution: these are Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Kashmiri, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu. While Hindi has been declared the official language of the country, this has raised certain apprehensions in the non-Hindi speaking states, particularly in the eastern and southern parts of the country. The fear is based on a feeling that the non-Hindi speaking population vis-a-vis the Hindi speaking population would be placed at a dis-advantage in respect of the competitions for the All India Services.

It is quite in the fitness of things that the major languages have been made official languages in their respective regions. It is unfortunate, however, that in some cases the seal for the adoption of the regional languages has worked counter to the use of Hindi as the national official language. Another aspect of the problem is that the over-powering hold of the regional languages within their spheres has sometimes led to the exclusion of the minority languages - or at least to a step-motherly treatment towards them.

(b) Religion and Casteism

Religions play an important role in the unity of communities but also leads to inter-religion conflicts. There are many religious communities in India. The Hindus constitute the majority, followed by Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, and so on (Table 17).

India being a Secular State gives freedom to every citizen a right and liberty to follow any religion and worship in his own way.

Sometimes, however, on very petty religious matters communal riots take place. Communal groups and most of all anti-social elements fan hatred which leads to violence and to loss of life and property. Effective administration

does check the incidence of rioting but unfortunately communal riots seem to be increasing in the recent years. Analyists think that the cause of communal riots is economic, political and social -- in that order. It is also suspected that some foreign countries in their attempt to destabilize India engineer communal riots.

Casteism is a problem which is similar in nature to religious conflicts. The persistence of the caste system in Indian society provides a striking example of the divergence of precept and practice. Caste was outlawed in the Constitution, and a bill unanimously adopted by Parliament in 1955 made the practice of untouchability a criminal offence. A number of policy measures have since been legislated to aid the schedule castes and scheduled tribes. Yet not very much has changed. Caste is so deeply entrenched in India's traditions that it cannot be eradicated except by drastic surgery; and for this there has been no serious political pressure. As a result, caste is coming more and more to be tacitly accepted and privately condoned. The political and intellectual leaders of political parties though they continue to condemn publicly "casteism" (together with "communalism", "provincialism", and "lingualism", and all the other forces that fragment national life) often

do so in an unconvincing manner. Not only this, but almost all politicians of almost all parties in their election campaigns patently cater to caste sensitivities.

(c) Regionalism

In a country which has gained independence only recently and has also embarked on a course of economic development, it is inevitable that regional tensions should arise and each region should strive to seek its identity. However, if this search of identity goes beyond a critical limit it leads to secessionist tendencies. The regions which are remote from the centre and feel deprived of the benefits of progress produce forces and leaders of separatism. This is a phenomenon which we find in India. There are devisive and separatist forces in some of the peripheral regions and unfortunately they receive a backing from some other countries. Nagaland, Mizoram, Assam, Kashmir, Punjab and Tamil Nadu are the peripheral states which harbour fissiperous elements and in some of them the problem is already formidable.

It appears that the re-organization of the States of India on a linguistic basis was far from a wise step. When the Indian National Congress was struggling for independence from the British rule, it had made a promise

to the people that the country's administrative units would be re-drawn on a linguistic basis. It had failed to realize that such a re-organization may lead to cleavages. Such cleavages have already taken place. Almost all the states now follow, or wish to follow, the policy of favouring the "sons of the soil" in respect of services, education and other fields. The term "Indian citizenship" is losing its meaning in the face of regionalism and parochial tendencies.

* * *

Now, we may examine as to how the three precepts, namely, Gandhian principles, centrality of administration and socialism apply to the demographic situation and social conflicts and cleavages.

First of all there is the problem of the fast and relentless growth of the already huge population. Socialism cannot be brought merely by the progress of economic plans if the gains in the economy are devoured by the increasing population. Family planning is a must but one wonders if Gandhiji, had he been alive, would have favoured the family planning programmes. With his simplistic moral philosophy, he would have been on the side of Mother Teresa.

The Congress Government did launch a family planning programme long ago. For years it remained an anaemic and wasteful pursuit in the hands of half hearted or even dishonest officers and workers. However, during the Emergency (June 1975 to February 1978) it was implemented forcefully. Undoubtedly, there was some element of coercion in the implementation of the programme. And the opposition parties made such capital out of it that the Family Planning Programme of the Emergency became one of the chief reasons of the overthrow of the Congress Government in the March 1977 General Elections. It should be noted that after coming back to power the Congress Government is wary in the implementation of the programme. It should be further noted that Family Planning is a state subject and there is very little which the central government can do in making the programme a success.

We may leave out the problems arising out of the vital statistics of the population and may concern ourselves with the problems of social conflict and cleavages.

It has already been noted that the multiplicity of languages and the re-organization of states has created some formidable problems. The Gandhian principles and the principles of socialism favour the flowering of different cultures along with their languages. However,

as one can see this flowering has not been an unmixed blessing. What has actually happened is a weakening of the centrality of administration. The adoption of Hindi as the official language, the rather hasty discard of English language have produced a cleavage between the northern Hindi speaking states and the southern non-Hindi states. Besides, the all-to-quick adoption of the regional languages in their respective areas has not only led to the awful lowering of general academic standards but has also told upon the efficiency of All India Services. The step-motherly treatment meted to certain minority languages such as Urdu and Sindhi are a different type of problem.

As far as religion is concerned, the Gandhian principle of respect for all religions was translated by the Constitution makers as "secularism". As a policy secularism can be the only base upon which a truly socialist structure can be raised. However, in practice the secular policies of the government suffer a good deal. On several occasions and in several matters the government loses its secular colour -- and to that extent Gandhian principles and socialist idealogy does suffer.

And if this be considered to be a small matter, the occurrence of communal riots, whose frequency is on the increase, is no small affair. Law and order are mainly

state subjects, so that the central government moves only when the emergency assumes huge proportions. It should further be noted that most of the communal and anti-social elements who indulge in rioting escape unpunished or are given only light punishment because of the loop holes in the law of the land.

As regards regionalism, its healthy growth would be the objective of Gandhian and socialist principles. But it seems to have become a cancerous growth in the body-politic of the country. The armed hostility of the underground elements in Nagaland and Mizoram, the demand for the expulsion of "foreign" population in Assam, the divisive voices in Kashmir, the occasional noises of secession in Tamil Nadu, and the most recent demand of Khalistan by a handful of persons in Punjab are matters which are, and should be, the immediate concern of the central administration if the country is to survive as one political entity. Nation building is no easy task and centrality of administration must come to the fore whenever and wherever it is needed.

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CHAPTER VI

CENTRE - STATE RELATIONSHIP

The Constitution of India has now been in operation for three decades. During this period the country has made significant advances on the path of planned progress. However, several unforeseen difficulties have arisen in the field of Union - State Relations. Strong differences of opinion have shown up even where the same political party happened to be in control at the Union and in the States. Where different parties controlled the administration at the Union and the State levels, the differences were naturally accentuated due to political motivations and as such demanded greater attention and understanding.

There is an imperative need to look, objectively and dispassionately, into the problem of Union State Relations in all its ramifications, to identify the areas of tension and dissension, to study and analyse the multifarious stresses, strains and motivations and finally to seek and to locate the conflict resolution mechanism available within the Indian political system and the constitutional framework.

India's historical experience has placed great value on the central authority as against the authority of the regional and local units. Thus, every time a demand for autonomy and decentralization is made, it is regarded as an attack on the goal of national unity. In fact, this should not be so, because decentralization of power is consistent with the concept of democracy. Moreover, the Indian cultural and institutional framework provides for the basic national unity. Centralization of power during the colonial period was based on the needs of the British rule.[1] Since independence, centralization is based on Charisma of the national leadership,[2] political apparatus of the ruling party, uniformity of administrative set-up and dependence of the States for financial resources. This phenomenon of centralization and dependence on Delhi are not only for resources but even for new ideas. This has many implications for the functioning of the political system. It not only arouses hostility of the States based on perceived impotence but also makes the task of the Central Government more difficult because all the pressures are directed to it. It is obvious that due to scarcity of resources, the centre can satisfy these demands only to a limited extent.

Every federal constitution necessarily contains provisions regulating centre-state relations. These

provisions must provide for adjustments in cases of conflict. There are generally four areas of potential conflict: the legislative, the administrative, the judicial and the financial. Besides, there are functional relationships between the centre and the state in the field of agricultural development, industrial development, water resources development, health and family planning, and education. The constitution of India provides for a single integrated judicial system and has thus eliminated the chances of friction between the Centre and the States in the judicial sphere. The purpose of this study is to examine the constitutional provisions and the working of the constitutional process with respect to potential conflict areas in Centre-State relations during the post-constitution era. We may now discuss these relationships one by one.

1. LEGISLATIVE RELATIONS

Chapter I of Part XI of the Constitution deals with the legislative relations between the Union and the States. Parliament has power to legislate for the whole or part of India and the State Legislatures have the power to legislate for the whole or part of individual states.

Distribution of legislative powers between the Centre and the States is an essential prerequisite of a federal constitution. And in India the legislative powers of Parliament and State legislatures have been divided into three lists in the Seventh Schedule and so on. List I, called the Union List, deals with all the subjects within the exclusive competence of Parliament. List II, called the State List, sets forth all the subjects which are in the exclusive competence of the State Legislatures. List III, called the Concurrent List, contains matters in respect of which both the Union and the States can legislate. Having made this division, the constitution has laid down a scheme of priority embodying the principle of supremacy of Union laws over State laws.

The Union List contains ninety-seven items of which the more important are defence, foreign affairs, banking, currency, coinage, Union taxes and duties. The Parliament has exclusive power to legislate with respect to foreign affairs including all matters which bring the Union into relation with any foreign country. Furthermore, treaty making and implementing of treaties is a subject of Union legislation.

There are also certain matters which are included in the Union List with a view to avoid tensions and disputes among the States. Such areas include inter-State

trade and commerce, regulation and development of inter-State trade and commerce, regulation and development of inter-State rivers and river valleys, inter-State migration and quarantine.

Certain heads of legislation which in the first instance belong exclusively to the States may become the subject of exclusive concern of the Parliament if an appropriate declaration is made by the Parliament. Industries are primarily assigned to the States but entry 52 of List I states the industries the control of which by the Union is declared by Parliament by law to be expedient in the public interest are to be dealt with by Parliamentary legislation.[3]

Further, there are certain subject - matters of legislation partly within the exclusive competence of the Parliament under List I and partly within the jurisdiction of the States by express provision. For example, entries 63 to 65 of List I relate to certain educational institutions and entry 66 deals with some aspects of higher education; entry 11 of State List gives education including universities to the legislative jurisdiction of the States but expressly makes this power subject to the power of Parliament under the above entries in List I and List III.

The Concurrent List includes forty-seven entries which fall into two groups. The first is made up of general law and procedure, civil procedure, evidence, marriage, divorce, property law, contracts etc. The other group includes subjects related to economic and social planning.

The general principle behind the entries in the Concurrent List seems to be that Parliament can initiate legislation on matters when nation-wide uniformity is required in these matters. This is so in respect of general laws and legal procedure. In the absence of Parliamentary legislation, the State can legislate in the concurrent matters.

II. ADMINISTRATIVE RELATIONS

The Constitution of India contains provisions for the division of executive power between the Centre and the States. In general, the executive power is coextensive with the legislative powers. The executive power of the Centre extends primarily to matters with respect to which Parliament has power to make laws. Similarly the executive power of a State extends to matters with respect to which State legislature has power to make laws. In the concurrent legislative field, the executive power of a State is subject to the executive power expressly conferred on the Union

by the constitution or by any law made by Parliament. Therefore, in the concurrent field, as is true with respect to legislation, so long as the Centre does not make a law, the executive power remains with the State.[4]

In the realm of administrative relations, the constitution provides several methods of Union control over the States. These provisions ensure that State's administrations do not interfere with the legislative and executive policies of the Union and also ensure the efficient working of each constituent State, which ultimately is most essential for the strength and survival of the Union.

Whereas relations between the Centre and the States are essentially political, the operational aspects of the political system can be regarded as the administrative dimension of these relations. The distinction between politics and administration may be possible at the institutional level but in respect of inter-governmental relations the interaction between politics and administration largely determines the substance and style of these relations. An understanding of this administrative dimension is more important in India, because, as compared with other federations, the Indian system contains some very unusual features. Rather than creating parallel

administrative structures, the Indian Constitution has provided for a single structure thereby intensifying interdependence of the two levels of government. The Constitution has also visualised an administrative system based on the paramountcy of the Centre.

The inter-dependence has tended to superior-subordinate relationship between the Centre and the States. This is, in fact, consistent with the trends prevalent before independence (The Government of India Act of 1935). The Constitution in this respect represents perpetuation of the old practices rather than institutional or theoretical innovations. As a result, everything bearing the Stamp of the Centre is more important and more valuable than things in the State sector.

It is out of the compulsions of inter-dependence that tensions in the Centre - State relations are aggravated. Naturally, the political dynamics make the difficult relationship more complex. The following five major issues are identified to understand Centre - State relations:

(i) Inter- State disputes

(ii) Role of the Governor

(iii) Maintenance of law and order

(iv) Administrative services

(v) Plan formulation

(i) Inter-State Disputes

Normally an inter-state dispute increases the bargaining power of the Centre vis-a-vis the concerned States and, therefore, it may be in the interest of the Centre to keep these disputes alive. Since the Centre is empowered by the Constitution to settle these disputes, the concerned States direct their demands and frustrations at the Centre and convert these disputes into issues of the Centre-State relations. In India, there are two types of inter-State disputes (a) inter-State water disputes and (b) inter-State boundary disputes.

(a) Inter-State Water Disputes:

The inter-State disputes over sharing river water are older than the Constitution. The founding fathers of the Constitution were aware of this problem and therefore, in Article 262 authorized the Parliament to legislate for adjudication of inter-State water disputes.

It appears that over the years, the Centre has preferred to settle inter-State water disputes by negotiations, thereby retaining its ability to arbitrate between the disputant States. In the Krishna - Godavari dispute, at one stage, Mysore and Maharashtra asked the Centre to refer the dispute to a tribunal but this was not acceded to by the Government of India.

The dispute among Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu on the sharing of Cauvery waters also highlights the Centre's eagerness to settle the dispute by negotiation. The Tamil Nadu Assembly unanimously passed a resolution calling upon the Centre to refer the Cauvery water dispute to a tribunal and also restrain the Karnataka Government from going ahead with the construction of the Hemavathi and other projects in the Cauvery basin.[5]

There are good reasons for insistence on negotiated settlement but if a dispute is prolonged, it is likely to become more complex because of political considerations and provide additional stimulus to the Centre-State tensions. Some of the long standing inter-State water disputes have been settled recently. The Chief Ministers of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan signed a six-point agreement recently for the rapid development and sharing of the waters of the Narmada River whose immense potential for irrigation, navigation and power generation had hitherto remained unutilized. The main features of the agreement are: (1) Prime Minister must allocate the share of Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat, after deducting the waters required by Maharashtra and Rajasthan; and (2) the height of the Navagaon Dam in Gujarat will

also be fixed by the Prime Minister.[6] In September, 1972, the States of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala withdrew Cauvery waters dispute from the Supreme Court, with the intention of settling the dispute through negotiations.[7]

(b) Boundary Disputes:

The inter-State boundary disputes represent the issues left unsettled by the States' Reorganization Commission. Their existence, in a way, suggests the failure of the Centre to settle these disputes. Such disputes tend to unite all the political forces at the State level and since the Centre alone has the power to revise the State boundaries, the State demands are directed to the Centre. There have been many such disputes in the past but three prominent disputes may be mentioned here: (1) Karnataka - Maharashtra disputes, (2) Punjab - Haryana dispute and (3) Assam - Nagaland dispute.

Existence of these disputes tends to inhibit cooperation between the neighbouring States on other vital matters. It also stimulates mass agitations and in general intensifies political conflict. For example, the Assam - Nagaland dispute recently assumed such serious proportions that both the States deployed their armed police on the borders. Since territorial issues generally arouse emotional responses, the possibility of negotiated settlement

is usually remote. It then becomes an obligation of the Centre to direct its intervention in such a way as to achieve speedy settlement of the dispute. Boundary disputes are the result of the reorganization of State boundaries and adhoc decisions tend to make reorganization a continuous affair, it is therefore, important to settle these disputes once for all.

(ii) Role of the Governor

The State Governor occupies an unique position in the Indian political system. It is a prestigious position with little substance of power. The Governor provides the powerful linkage between the State Government and the Central Government. He is at the same time the constitutional head of a State and the representative of the President, that is, the Central Government, in that State.

The changed political landscape of the post 1967 years persuaded rethinking on the role of the Governor. When Chief Ministers belonged to the opposition, the Governor was valued as the Centre's reliable representative and when in a coalition government, the Chief Minister's position was weakened, the balance of power in State's politcs tended to shift in favour of the Governor.

(iii) Maintenance of Law and Order

The Constitution makes the State Government responsible for maintenance of public order as well as protection of the Central Government property located in the State. The properties of the Centre and its undertakings are spread all over the country. The most conspicuous instance is that of the railways. The Railway Police, for instance, is part of the State governments. Any disruption in the effective functioning of the Central undertakings will cause inconvenience to the public. To avoid such a situation, the Constitution authorises the Centre to give directives to various State governments for the maintenance of conditions that are necessary for the uninterrupted functioning of the Central agencies (Article 256 and 257). In case of non-compliance of any State Governments to Central directives, the Centre could resort to the extreme step of taking over the administration of such State under Article 356.

The basic problem arises from the role of the Centre in periods of strife, like strikes, bundhs, gheraos and general lawlessness. In some of the states, like Kerala and West Bengal, the situation assumed alarming dimensions. What should the Centre do if the State

governments do not effectively safeguard the Central Government properties? In spite of the directives from the Centre, if the State does not take adequate precautionary measures against possible damage to the Central Government undertaking, could the Centre take any remedial measure short of declaring emergency in that State under Article 356? When the Central Government rushed the Central Reserved Police battalions for this purpose, it evoked bitter criticism in some States. The Centre insists on its constitutional prerogative to issue directives to State Governments and to ensure compliance. It is also empowered to take over the State administration in case of persistent non-compliance by the State Government. It is correct that constitutionally the paramount power of the Centre is well-established but these provisions were suitable for different political context. When the ideological and political gap between the Centre and some States widens, the insistence to ensure strict enforcement of those provisions will only intensify the conflict and confrontation. It should certainly be an obligation of the Centre to consult the States before issuing directives which are likely to be controversial.

(iv) Administrative Services

In a federal set-up, it may seem to be an unusual feature to have an All India service that serves the needs of the States but is controlled ultimately by the Union. The feature becomes all the more unusual because of the specific constitutional sanction for the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) and the Indian Police Service (IPS). The provision cuts across the true federal principle and unless one believes it to have been made in a fit of absent-mindedness, it must have been inserted by the makers of the Constitution for considerations strong enough to over-ride the classical federal set-up.[8]

The administrative Reforms Commission in its report on "Centre-State Relationship" recommended that the IAS should be entrusted with land revenue administration and magisterial and other regulatory work in the States in fields other than those looked after by officers of other functional services.

(v) Plan Formulation

Social and economic planning is in the Concurrent List but most of the developmental and welfare activities with which planning is concerned are in the State sector. The two decades of planning have tended to push the

political system to greater centralization due to both the Central control over resources for development and the preponderance of the Centralized planning machinery.

The Constitution of India is extremely detailed on many institutional and operational aspects but it makes no mention of the planning machinery. Planning Commission was set up soon after, merely by an executive order. This non-constitutional, and even non-statutory body has witnessed ups and downs in its fortune but by and large, it has been a vital instrument of Central power over the States. In theory at least the responsibility for taking and implementing decisions rests with the Central and the State Governments, but its strategic position in the policy process has given it immense power, particularly over the States.

The National Development Council (NDC) is another institution in the planning process at the national level. Composed of the Planning Commission Members, members of the Union Cabinet and the Chief Ministers of the States, it is a federal body, and provides a forum for interaction between the Central Government, the State Governments and the Planning Commission. Although, as a high political body, it is charged with the responsibility for laying down guidelines for the formulation of the national plan,

experience suggests that it is merely a deliberative body rather than a decision - making level in the system. The State Chief Ministers have generally used this forum to articulate their demands to the Centre. Its meetings are held twice a year and its membership is too large to reach effective agreement on any policy issue? Many suggestions have been made in recent years to enhance the effectiveness of the NDC in the planning process but one wonders if the Central Government is really eager to develop it into a centre of power.

III. ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL DIMENSION

The economic and financial dimension of the Centre-State relations has been more conspicuous than the political and the administrative dimensions mostly because the Constitution provides a fairly detailed treatment to it and also because of primacy of economics over politics and administration in national affairs, particularly under a single party dominant system. It is, therefore, natural that more discussion has taken place on financial relations and coordination of economic policy between the Centre and the States.

The problems of economic development of different States will provide an appropriate framework to analyse and understand the economic and the financial relations

between the Centre and the States of the Union. Partly due to historical reasons and partly due to uneven distribution of known resources, different States had attained different levels of economic and social development before the commencement of the first five-year Plan.

The first and the subsequent five-year plans, while acknowledging the problem of uneven development of different States, confined their attention to some ad-hoc programmes which did very little to lay even the foundations for a rational social and economic development of the States.

Investment in agriculture, industry and social overheads, such as, education, housing and public health, is considered to be a major factor in the development. Investment in a State is undertaken by (i) State Government, (ii) Central Government, (iii) organized private sector and (iv) unorganized sector. Over the last twenty years, the better off States obtained or attracted a major share of the total investment in the country leaving the States at the lower end of the development scale where they were.

In spite of the overwhelming powers of the Centre, paradoxically the Central Government has not proved very effective in persuading States to follow nationally consistent economic policies, especially in respect of agricultural

taxation, food policy etc. It is generally felt that a large number of the Central Government's investment decisions, particularly those relating to industrial enterprises, have yet to find a rational foundation in terms of either efficiency or equitable geographical distribution.

IV. NEED FOR GUIDELINES

Conflict in any political system is inevitable and that relations between two levels of the system are bound to manifest tensions at different points. After all, both Centre and the State put claims on the same limited resources, they have overlapping jurisdictions and there are differences in the perception and articulation of interests. The emphasis, therefore, should be on evolving methods of managing conflict -- keeping it within controllable limits and directing it to constructive purposes -- and not on eradicating it.

It should also be noted that the political context of the system will determine the level of conflict in the Centre-State relations. Thus, for example, the level of conflict will be high in the case of multi-party system, whereas the inter-governmental conflict will be low in the case of dominance by a single party. Similarly, the

Centre-State conflict is a part of the overall conflicts in the society. Sometimes, this conflict will be visible whereas at other times it may remain under the surface. It may also project itself as an autonomous conflict (when all or most States are united against the Centre) or it may be combined with other kinds of conflict. Thus, the Centre-State conflict may just be an extension of the conflict between rival parties and competing ideologies. If the inter-governmental conflicts are on basic and fundamental issues, it will be more difficult to avoid politics of confrontation, but when conflict on specific issues can be identified, the task of finding solutions becomes relatively less difficult. It may also be kept in view that some elements of conflict are inherent in the situations arising out of regional imbalances whereas other kinds of conflicts may be deliberately initiated by either of the parties. Thus, the Central Government may initiate conflict relationship by attempting to topple a State Government of the opposition party and a State Government may mobilise mass forces against the Centre on considerations of political expediency.

In India, there has been a heavy stress on the use of the Constitutional-legal approach not only to the Centre-State relations but also to other problems of the

political system. For those who are interested in evolving methods to manage conflict, it is important that they identify the specific issues and problems with care because once the specific issues are identified, reasonable persons are more likely to agree on the operational remedies. Having agreed on the specific issues, it is necessary to adopt one or more essential methods of finding solutions.

V. CENTRE-STATE RELATIONS IN THE FIELD OF AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

The major concern of the makers of the Indian Constitution was to devise a workable democratic system of government suited to the vital needs of the country. On the one hand they gave to the federal system which they were establishing a unitary bias and on the other they provided for a great deal of interaction between the Central and State Governments. The Constitutional division of powers[10] does not specifically mention agriculture among the powers of the Union Government. Most powers relating to agriculture are placed in the State list. These include almost all aspects of agriculture and animal husbandry, water supplies, irrigation and drainage, land improvement and colonization, taxes on agricultural income, relief of agricultural indebtedness, succession duties on

land, agricultural credit, etc. The production, supply and distribution of goods within the State, education, local government and cooperation all of which intimately concern agriculture likewise are within the exclusive sphere of the States. The object of the framers of the Constitution was clearly to make the States primarily and directly responsible for matters concerning the development of agriculture and welfare of the rural population. The Centres' responsibility for the development of agriculture is only a complementary and ultimate responsibility.

The development of agriculture, through its modernization, is the most urgent need of India today. It is a truism that in India agriculture is more a way of life than a profession or industry carried on with a view to the profits to be earned by its practice. The vast masses of India are tied to the soil and dependent on it for their subsistence, without any alternative means of livelihood. Eighty per cent of India's population is in this predicament. Under traditional methods of cultivation practised in the country through the ages, with soils that are nearly exhausted, with little of additional land that could be brought under cultivation and with a population growing at an alarming rate, the country faces a crisis.

Though self-sufficiency has been the proclaimed goal of agricultural policy for over two decades and efforts at raising agricultural productivity have been continuous since the early forties, self-sufficiency still remains a distant goal.

The States should play the greater role in developing agriculture and in bringing about this revolution that they should become plan minded and development conscious, and be fully committed to long-term plans of development in their own interest and in the national interest. They need to develop an awareness of great national problems, a national outlook and their own share of responsibility for their solution. States and local authorities should become active and innovative in developing agriculture which is the nation's life blood.

While it is necessary that all levels of government should cooperate in the field of agricultural development, it is equally important that the over-centralization of policy and planning should be avoided and the States should become the active leaders in the task of agricultural developments. A certain balance in Centre-State relations is needed in a federal system. The Centre could hardly undertake more functions than it has actually attempted. An extensive federal machinery of administration extending

down to the village for the direct provision of agricultural services to the farmers will be prohibitive in terms of cost and will hardly be effective in so vast a country as India. Vigorous democratic political institutions at the State and local levels are essential both to solve substantive problems and to maintain the values of a democratic system of government.

VI. CENTRE-STATE RELATIONS IN THE FIELD OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

The framers of the Indian Constitution could not have envisaged all the tensions and problems that would arise on account of a programme of planned industrial development. Nor could they have provided for these problems even if they had been able to anticipate them.

How has industrial development proceeded in India under the federal constitutional system? Under the Seventh Schedule, which lists Union, State and Concurrent powers separately, jurisdiction over industries is assigned to the States, except over industries (a) declared by Parliament to be necessary for defence or war and (b) the control of which by the Union is declared by Parliament by law to be expedient in the public interest. The second exception is a crucial one and has provided the justification for

the Industries Development and Regulation Act of 1951 which is the basic law governing the Central Government's activities in the field of industrial development. This exception gives omnibus authority to Parliament to regulate and control industries in the national interest. And since economic and social planning is a concurrent subject, it has resulted in some intrusion from the Centre into affairs otherwise earmarked for the States and extended Central control over national industrial development.

The control through national economic planning has been further reinforced by (a) the preponderant share of the Centre in industrial financing (b) the development of heavy industry which under the nationally accepted strategy of development became the core of the plans, and (c) the provision of aid and advice to the States in the development of small-scale and village industries.

These developments have led to exaggerated complaints about the violation of the Constitution. Santhanam complains that, "planning has superseded the federation and our country is functioning almost like a unitary system in many respects".[11]

The power-generating capacity in the industrial States of Maharashtra and West Bengal has been growing

significantly below the national average rate and that of industrially backward States of Orissa, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Assam much above it.[12]

Several States outside West Bengal and Maharashtra are maintaining a much higher tempo of industrial development. The reduction in regional disparities may have been slower than States desire but the drift of developments seems to have been towards a decrease rather than an increase in regional imbalance. It is true that rates of industrial growth outside West Bengal and Maharashtra are bound to be higher because of the earlier higher level of development in these States. But that it should happen is a matter of satisfaction to all those who want greater geographical industrial balance in the country. There are sad cases such as that of Uttar Pradesh. It would be extremely naive to attribute Uttar Pradesh's slower rate of industrial growth to the neglect of the Central Government or its political weakness vis-a-vis the Centre.

Thus it is not easy to accept the hypothesis or the allegation that the Central Government has tended to tailor its industrial policy and infra-structure investments more to the needs of the older industrial centres than to those of the other parts of the country. Indeed, there are

several instances where multiple but smaller and uneconomic units have been licensed. This has been done either on account of pressure of State Governments or on the dubious plea that this will promote competition.

Political factors make it difficult to adhere strictly to the logic of economic development but a constant endeavour to approximate to it is necessary nevertheless. It is even more so when the political party in power at the Centre is not in power in all the States as well. The Centre must be fair. The States should also be allowed to regain their legitimate share of initiative in certain spheres of industrial activity. The development of small industries is a State subject, the primary responsibility for which rests with the States. But in recent years, powerful Central agencies have been set up which have reduced the initiative of the States in this field.

The restoration of greater initiative to the States or firmer measures to promote industrial dispersal or greater 'fairmindedness' on the part of the Centre might contribute to smoother Centre-State relations. The viability of the Indian federal system will depend not so much on the economic arrangements between the Centre and the States as on how powerful a political force all-India consciousness

turns out to be. The Indian social system has been compared to a fruit with the combined properties of a tangerine and an onion. Like a tangerine, India is divided into segments -- linguistic, regional, religious and tribal. And like an onion, India is composed of a succession of layers -- castes and socio-economic classes, with the layers of each segment unconnected with the layers of other segments.[13] The challenge this poses for the political forces for the unity of India is formidable. The cruel fact about economic development is that in its earlier phases, it is disruptive in nature and can make for disunion. The economic forces can be over-borne only by stronger political forces. Economic development is a unifying force if it can be sustained over a sufficiently long period. In the short run, politics will be in command and will determine whether or not India will be permitted to have a long and sustained period for economic development.

VII. CENTRE-STATE RELATIONS IN WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

The economic prosperity of a country is based on the development of water resources, particularly of the river waters. Intensive exploitation and utilization of river waters is most essential to the development of agriculture and industry in a country like India where the

rainfall is low and undependable. In most parts of the country, rainfall is concentrated in the four monsoon months, June to September; the remainder of the year is practically dry. The average rainfall in the country is about 110 cm. but the variation is from as much as 12 cm. in the desert areas of Rajasthan to nearly 1250 cm. in the hills of Assam. Further, even the rainfall of traditional months is erratic and subject to wide variations.[14] Consequently, successful cultivation is not possible without the aid of irrigation in one form or another. Since India's economy is predominantly agricultural, the harnessing of water resources and rivers for beneficial purpose of irrigating the dry land has assumed great significance in independent India. The development of river waters was begun by the British rulers in India. With the attainment of independence, considerable importance was given to the tapping of water resources in the country. This feature is reflected in the successive Five-Year Plans of the country.

India's network of rivers is reasonably well-spread over its entire territory, except the Rajasthan desert. The rivers may be divided in two groups, (i) the snow-fed perennial rivers of the northern India, and (ii) the rivers of Central and Southern India. The major

rivers in the country are inter-State in character. They cut across political boundaries between States. For instance, within India, the Indus river basin includes Kashmir, Punjab, parts of Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Rajasthan. The Brahmaputra river rises in Tibet and flows through Assam, West Bengal and Bangladesh. The Ganga and its tributaries run through Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal. The Narmada and Tapti flow through Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat, the Mahanadi flows through Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and parts of Bihar and Maharashtra. The Godavari basin includes Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. The Krishna river drains Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. The Cauvery flows through Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Smaller rivers such as the Damodar, Mahi and the Pennar are also inter-State.

Development of river water resources for purposes of irrigation and generation of hydro-electric power has been progressing steadily since independence. Many multi-purpose river valley schemes have been executed on inter-State rivers. River valley projects such as Bhakra-Nangal, Hirakud, Chambal, Tungbhadra, Nagarjunasagar and Damodar valley, which provide for irrigation, power and

flood control, have greatly contributed to the development of the regions served by them. In many of these projects, the States have cooperated in jointly developing the river concerned in an integrated mannar, thus deriving the optimum benefits out of a river by the several riparian States. But in some cases, the progress of development of water resources has been hampered to some extent by the existence of friction among the co-riparian States over the utilization of inter-State river waters. The two of the major basins in which this has been so are those of the Krishna-Godavari and Narmada rivers. The result has been that the river development schemes in such rivers are at a standstill. The regions served by these rivers in particular and the country as a whole are losing the immense benefits by way of irrigation, power and control of floods which the various projects will bring forth. It is highly in the national interest that such inter-State disputes are settled as early as possible so that river development may proceed without any man-made hurdle.

In spite of the fact that the Constitution assigns a primary role to the States in planning and development of river schemes, the Centre has come to play a vital role. Firstly, practically all the major rivers run through more than one State, and therefore, it creates the necessity

of coordinating the activities of the different States to avoid waste and friction, and of adopting an integrated approach to make the best use of the river by all the States concerned. Secondly, the planning and execution of river projects require high degree of technical and administrative efficiency which again is a matter in which the Centre can help the States a great deal owing to the resources at its disposal. Thirdly, the river projects require huge outlay beyond the resources of a State and it is, therefore, necessary for the Centre to render financial assistance to the States.

The Constitution has assigned a primary role to the States in the development of water. Under the Union power to legislate over inter-State rivers and river valleys the Union has not acted so far to extend its control over the water development. Theoretically, therefore, the Central executive has hardly any power in the matter of water development. In practice, however, the Centre has been playing a dominant role in the matter on an informal basis. No important river scheme can be executed by a State without the approval of the Central Government. In the matter of execution also the Central Government plays a leading role through the machinery of the control boards to see that the States are properly executing the projects. All this has been possible through the massive

financial power of the Centre. The Centre has also been playing a leading role in giving assistance to the States in various matters such as exploring projects for the States, advising them on the proposed sites of the various projects, giving technical advice on the execution of the projects, providing training facilities for the State engineers and arranging for the machines, equipments etc.

On several major multi-purpose water schemes various States have cooperated in jointly developing them. The approach has been the integrated development of the river as a whole. This is a satisfactory way of dealing with the problem for such an approach makes it possible to make the optimum use of a river. Even in cases where joint development has not taken place, disputes between the riparian States relating to the sharing of water and other connected matters have been amicably settled. All this has been possible due to the active part played by the Centre. However, there have also been some disputes on which the States have not agreed and the conflict between them has been persisting since long.

VIII. CENTRE-STATE RELATIONS IN EDUCATION

The significance of a proper understanding of the Centre-State relations in education is obvious because it is on this understanding that the proper development of

education in the country will depend to a large extent. Even prior to independence and specially thereafter, a demand has gradually grown in all parts of the country that there should be a national system of education and a national education policy with certain common objectives and major programmes. When this demand seemed to have reached its peak and gathered the largest strength, the Fourth General Elections created a political situation which revealed how limited was the real Central authority in education -- a fact which had hitherto been disguised by the accident of a single political party being in power in the Centre as well as in the States. This sudden contrast that has developed between the deepening desire for a National Education policy on the one hand and the realization of the lack of constitutional authority to formulate and implement it effectively on the other, adds a unique urgency for discussion.

The question of what should be the ideal Centre-State relations in education is an important question at present and will remain so in the years ahead. There is no easy answer, especially because the usual tools of educational analysis -- historical review, comparative evaluation or a consensus of the current opinions on the

subject -- all seem to fail to provide any clear direction which may be acceptable to all.

In fact, Centre-State relations in education over the last 170 years have presented an extremely variegated picture in India. Prior to 1833, there was a total decentralisation when all the three Presidencies of the British Empire followed their own educational policy.[15] The Charter Act of 1833 went to the other extreme and created a highly centralised form of administration in the country under which education, like any other subjects, became a responsibility of the Government of India. In 1870, a period of decentralization of authority was initiated by Lord Mayo. This decentralization was gradually increased till 1918 by which time the Provincial Governments came to possess large authority over education, although the Government of India did continue to exercise considerable supervisory powers in essential matters. In addition, there was the Indian Education Service which was created in 1897 and whose officers filled the important posts in all the Provincial Education Department. This period may, therefore, be regarded as a period of large decentralization combined with limited but essential Central control.

The Government of Indid Act of 1919 made a still more radical change. It introduced diarchy in the provinces under which education became a transferred subject, placed under the control of Indian Ministers responsible to a legislature with a large elected majority. As a corollary to this, therefore, the Central control over education had to be reduced to the minimum, if not eliminated altogether. Consequently, there came about what the Hartog Committee called a "divorce" between education and the Government of India. This situation continued right till 1950 although, in view of its disastrous results, some attempts were made, from 1935 onwards, to bring the Government of India back into picture through such measures as the revival of the Central Advisory Board of Education.

The adoption of the Constitution in 1950 changed the situation to some extent. The Government of India now obtained a larger authority over education than under the Government of India Acts of 1919 or of 1935 and the coordination and maintenance of standards in higher education was made a Central responsibility. This trend towards centralisation was incidentally supported by three extraneous factors, namely, (1) the adoption of planning as the technique of development with the consequential creation of Planning Commission and the formulation of Five-Year Plans covering both Central and State developmental activities,

(2) the institution of large Central grants earmarked for specific educational schemes, and (3) the political accident of the same party being in power at the Centre and in the States. Till 1967, therefore, it may be said that education, though constitutionally a 'State' subject, could in essence be administered as a concurrent subject. Finally, in 1975, it was actually brought in concurrent list.

It will thus be seen that historically there has been a variety of positions in Centre-State relations beginning with (i) extreme decentralisation and passing on successively to, (ii) total decentralisation, (iii) a large measure of decentralisation combined with some form of direct and indirect supervisory control, (iv) an almost complete 'divorce' between the Centre and education, (v) a limited constitutional authority covered into a 'defacto concurrency' through accidental factors, and finally (vi) education becoming a concurrent subject.

In a subject like education, where controversies often form the core of progress, conflicts are bound to arise, sooner or later, over several issues. In fact, some of these have developed already. For instance, some years ago, the Government of India recommended, in the interest of national integration, that no State should impose any restriction on admissions to medical and engineering institutions on grounds of domicile and that

admissions to these institutions should be open, on equal terms, to all citizens of the country. But in spite of protracted negotiations, it has not been possible to make the States agree to this suggestion. Everyone recognizes the significance and importance of a vigorous implementation of the three-language formula at the school stage. One State has refused to allow Hindi while some others are bent on eliminating English. In respect of textbooks complaints have often been received that some books used in some subjects contain material prejudicial to national integration or offend some other State or a part of the country. The need for creating an all-India Education Service has been largely recognised. But in spite of the efforts made by the Centre, the proposal has not become acceptable to the State Governments. Other examples of such conflicts which have arisen in actual practice can be easily multiplied. Conflict of views and policies are inevitable in the present situation where education is mostly a State responsibility and the Centre is required to evolve a long-term and coordinated view on the problem.

IX. LANGUAGE AND CENTRE-STATE RELATIONS

The reorganization of States on a linguistic basis left unsolved, and has even given rise to, some new conflicts and tensions, especially relating to the rights of linguistic

minorities, the claims of various States on areas of bordering State, and the role of Hindi as the official language of the country.

The question of the rights of linguistic minorities and border disputes are, however, closely related, for in both cases the genesis of the problem lies in the deep attachment of the people to their language and literature, their anxiety about or fear of being submerged and of being at a disadvantage in the new linguistic set-up. The linguistic problem -- the presence of the several languages in the country, the need of and the search for a lingua franca -- has become a part of the political game. The linguistic problems are also sometimes, as in the case of Urdu and Punjabi, given a communal twist and their solution is, thus, made all the more difficult. Language, however, has nothing to do with the faith or ideology of a people; it is only a means of communicating one's thought and feelings and of acquiring knowledge, and as such it is treasured possession not of a particular group or community but of all mankind. Language, or rather the choice of Hindi as the official language of the country, has been the source of not merely animated discussion and heated controversy, but also bitter wrangling between those who stand to gain and others who stand to lose if Hindi becomes the official language in the fullest sense of the word.

The Constitution recognises as many as fifteen national languages, of which Hindi in the Devanagari script is the official language of the Union. There is no denying the necessity or utility of having a link language for a multi-lingual country, and that Hindi is capable of serving as a convenient link in the Indian multi-lingual society. But, unfortunately, it has become the source of bitter friction and conflict between the different sections of the Indian people, firstly, because of the failure of the Union Government to define the nature and standard of Hindi as the link language and the consequent confusion or identification of the official language of the Union with the highly Sanskritised Hindi, which is the official language of the Hindi - speaking States, which as Jawaharlal Nehru said so often only the elite can follow. There is a view that Hindi as an official language should be distinguished from Hindi as the literary language; even that the official language of the Union should be designated as Hindustani and written in a modified Roman script.

X. CENTRE-STATE RELATIONS IN PLANNING

One advantage of having a number of States working together in a federation in a country is that the total territory which is included within common customs boundaries,

and having a common currency and fiscal laws is extensive enough to provide a large market so that the benefits of the economies of large-scale production and division of labour are easily available. At the same time the advantages of an extensive area and a large population are bound to create a number of hurdles in evolving an economic policies which would be of equal benefit to the various parts of the country. This produces difficulties in Centre-State and inter-State relations. As and when the Centre assumes a considerable responsibility for the planned development and operation of the economy, Centre-State relations assume additional dimensions.

First, there arises the problem of reconciling economic growth with reduction in inequalities among different classes of people, and then there is also the problem of ensuring a rapid rate of economic growth and at the same time preventing an accentuation of inequalities among different regions and States. How does one formulate a plan and at the same time integrates various State Plans together so that they are consistent with and complementary to each other? Further, how is this to be achieved in a democratic system under which different parties may be in power at the Centre and in various States? How does one make sure of the necessary continuity in development plans

when not only might there be different parties in power at the Centre and in the States at the same time, but the complexion of Governments at various levels is liable to change over a period of time? Another concrete question that arises is: how are the scarce resources to be distributed between the Centre and the States, and among the States, so as to satisfy their developmental requirements?

One of the principal objectives of a federal Constitution is to reconcile the claims of national 'sovereignty' with the 'sovereignty' of the constituent States. This is sought to be achieved in the Indian Constitution mainly through the division of powers and functions. Social and economic planning is included in the concurrent list. Most of the subjects with which planning is concerned, however, fall either in the Union List or in the State List. Among the important subjects falling in the Union List are: large industry, railways, national highways, civil aviation, major ports, shipping, communications, banking, insurance, overall monetary and credit policy, foreign loans and inter-State and foreign trade. The principal sources of revenue allotted to the Centre include taxes on income other than agricultural income, corporation tax, excise and customs. The subjects appearing in the State list include agriculture, forests, fisheries,

irrigation, roads and road transport, minor ports, medium and small industry and social services, like education and health. The principal sources of revenue, allotted to the States include land revenue, agricultural income tax, stamps and registration duties and taxes on commodities, specially the sales tax. Power is a concurrent subject. So are price control and trade and commerce in the production, supply and distribution of foodstuffs, edible oils, raw cotton and raw jute.

The Constitution authorises the Union to regulate and control certain subjects in the State List such as roads, inland waterways and mines, if found expedient in public interest. The Union further has the power to coordinate and lay down standards in specified spheres like higher education and research. There are important provisions under which the Centre can exercise a dominating influence over States.

Apart from various constitutional provisions which make the Central Government a very dominant partner, traditions regarding governmental and administrative organization that have been inherited as a result of some 200 years of the British rule accentuate the centralizing tendency. In the not too distant past, provincial governments were merely subordinate agencies of the Centre and the

influence of that tradition lingers on though it is steadily getting attenuated. The dominance by the All-India Services of many important administrative agencies and the presence of many of the most senior officers of these Services at the Centre provide a further support to the tradition of accepting the Central Government's guidance and advice. Between 1947 and 1976, when the Congress Party was in power almost in all the States, these centralizing tendencies were strengthened because the Central Cabinet usually consisted of the more senior and influential political leaders of the Congress Party as compared to those in power in the States.

Looking back, one finds that points of dispute began to be aired by the States more openly from the time of the formulation of the Third Five-Year Plan. They assumed even greater magnitude as a result of the political developments following the death of Jawaharlal Nehru in 1964, the economic difficulties of 1965 and 1966, the interruption in Planning, and the changing political situation, specially after the General Elections in 1967, when non-Congress governments took over in as many as nine States.

One of the major complaints of the States has been that of over centralization and Central domination in this

as in many other fields of Governmental activity. For long, one of the principal points of criticism was the allocation of Central Plan assistance. Not only the size of the Plan outlay at the Centre has been increasing more rapidly than that of all the States taken together, but the manner in which the States should undertake development efforts have also been attempted to be dictated by Central authorities. The advantage that the Centre enjoyed because of the more flexible financial resources allotted to it under the Constitution, and the increasing role of foreign assistance in India's development finance which further increased the funds at the disposal of the Centre, were said to be the factors responsible for Central domination. It was alleged that the States, though responsible for some of the most crucial sectors of economy and social life, were starved of financial resources, while there was more than adequate finance available at the Centre even for less essential developments. In fact, the Centre was in a position, through conditional financial assistance, to impose its own policies and programmes on the States, irrespective of their relevance or priority. As a result, not only the essence of the federal system was subverted but also genuine development properly related to the specific resource potential and felt requirements of each State could not take place. Imposition of a superficial

uniformity was in effect a waste of resources. Moreover, undertaking schemes and projects to which the State administration did not feel adequately committed resulted in the projects and programmes not being properly implemented.

At the same time, it was pointed out that one of the possible advantages that should have arisen out of such centralization, viz., balanced development of the country as a whole, had not been achieved. It was alleged that under the Plans, as in the case of individuals so also in the case of regions and States, the rich had grown richer and the poor became poorer. While not all States pitched their criticism so high, many of them felt that the imbalance in development in the pre-Independence period had not been much corrected through planning. Central projects not being evenly distributed, the ineffectiveness of industrial licensing for ensuring the location of industries in less industrialized regions and States, the concentration of financial assistance by Central financial institutions in favour of the already developed States, and the inadequate assistance provided by the Centre for the development of less developed States were all mentioned as important factors contributing to the continuance of such an imbalance.

As against this, the Central authorities complained that State planning and development efforts continued to

remain at comparatively rudimentary levels.[16] It was felt that in spite of various suggestions made from the Centre, the States had failed to develop a proper machinery for effective development planning. There was also too much short-sightedness in the formulation of plans, too little understanding of the discipline that was necessary, and inadequate political courage and administrative competence to implement the necessary measures. More projects were taken up than could be financed, resulting in thinly spreading investment over a number of projects, and leading to long gestation periods and insufficient or delayed returns. It was said that the States had merely made the Centre a whipping boy for their own failure.

There is considerable truth in such criticisms made on both sides. With the allocation of financial resources being what it is, it is undoubtedly true that the Centre has all along been in a far better financial position. The result has been that not only in respect of subjects under the jurisdiction of the Centre, but even in respect of subjects, for which the responsibility has to be borne by the States, funds are far more easily available at the Centre than in the States. While to some extent, financial devolution is effected on the award of the Finance Commission, an increasing part of financial assistance from

the Centre flows to the States on the advice of the Planning Commission.

XI. CENTRE-STATE FINANCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

The States in India derive a substantial part of their income from tax-sharing, grants and loans from the Union Government. It has been argued that this militates against an important principle of federal finance, of the responsibility on each layer of raising its own resources to meet the expenditure decided to be incurred on its functioning, and that, therefore, there is a need of either giving the States additional sources of revenue, or of reducing their functions. The distribution of functions between the Union and the States depends on the competence and suitability of each layer to discharge them. Since many of the economic and social services need close local guidance and supervision, and the Indian Constitution has in its distribution of functions amply provided for the role of the Union Government and the preservation of the all-India interests, no scope apparently exists for a change in functions in favour of the Union Government.

Union-State financial relations have come under severe strain. The core of dispute is resources. Ever since the Constitution was made, the States have felt

deprived, more so, financially than politically. All Chief Ministers, past and present alike, have at one time or another felt the crunch. So long as the Congress was in control of the Union and all the States, there were occasional whimpers about the inadequacy of financial assistance given but no challenge to the Centre's authority or a demand for loosening its hold.

But all this changed almost overnight in early 1967. The General Elections which demolished the monolith of Congress power also destroyed the subservience to the States of the Centre. The non-Congress governments were not prepared to go along with the Centre in its political and economic policies, not even agree on national priorities. They had distinctive political ideologies and socio-economic programmes of their own which they proceeded to shape without regard to resources available. Namboodiripad made minatory noises in Kerala and demanded a redefinition of Union-State relations; a cry, that was soon taken up by DMK in Tamil Nadu and the United Front Government in West Bengal.

Finance being the foundation of all governments, it soon became the focal point of controversy and the demand grew for the revision of the financial provisions. Some of the Congress States also joined in to give the demand

weight and urgency. It is necessary, therefore, to reassess these provisions, review the background against which they were formulated and evaluate the need for constitutional amendments.

In adopting the Government of India Act of 1935 as the foundation of the Constitution of the Indian Union, the Centre got the upper hand. The national government retained certain powers of coordination and control over the regional governments. With the partitioning of the subcontinent quite fresh in memory, it was considered necessary to have a strong Centre for fostering national unity, for neutralizing the centrifugal pulls of autonomous States, for giving the ethnic and religious minorities a feeling of security and, lastly, for the development of backward States and areas.

In a country so large and varied with so many religions, languages, cultures and traditions, all contending for recognition and growth, it was imperative to vest the Centre with authority unusual in a federation. Many still believe and recent developments lent strength to the belief, that India's salvation lies in adopting the unitary system or at least in a strong Centre. They suggest that the authority of the Centre should be enlarged by a liberal interpretation of the article of the Constitution. If

necessary, the Constitution itself should be suitably amended. Contrary to this, many others hold that the States should be made strong and viable, financially and administratively equipped, to fulfil responsibilities entrusted to them. The strength of the Union, they claim, lies in the strength of the States and not in weakening them.

It may be noted that though the Constitution has demarcated the jurisdiction and authority of the Union and the States, the Concurrent List does not extend over the financial field. The taxing powers of the Union and the States have been kept distinct and separate, without any overlap.

The major sources of revenue assigned to the Union are customs duties, corporation tax, excise duties other than on medicinal, toilet and alcoholic preparations. The major sources allocated to the States are land revenue, sales tax, excise duties on medicinal, toilet and alcoholic preparations and estate duty. Income-tax has been made a divisible head of revenue but the Union has the right to impose and retain the proceeds of a surcharge on this and all other taxes levied by it for distribution to the States.

This division of taxing power, in contrast to the division of administrative power, has made the dependence

of the States to the Union nearly absolute. It was not that the Constituent Assembly was not aware that in adopting the financial provisions of the 1935 Act, it was making the States lean heavily on the Union for financial support. It was a deliberate act to provide for a measure of central coordination of social and economic activities of the States to ensure their balanced and harmonious growth. But whatever be the reason, the distribution has given the Centre the resilient and expansible sources of revenue and given the States, the inelastic and even eroding sources of revenue.

Union-State relations have now reached a stage in which intermingling of resources and functions will no longer work smoothly. It is best to have a clear-cut division. This will insulate the Centre from demands and complaints and give the States freedom to shape their own destinies on an assured quantum of devolution and such resources as they themselves are prepared to mobilise.

XII. CENTRE-STATE RELATIONSHIP IN THE FIELD OF HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING

As far as programmes of health and family planning go their execution and supervision both in respect of Centrally sponsored and Centrally aided schemes lie mostly with the State Governments. The Centre's direct control

is confined to certain post-graduate institutions, promotion of special studies in medicine and nutrition, Union agencies and institutes for research, some pilot projects, the health scheme of the Central Government servants and the Members of Parliament, port health and quarantine for both sea and air, seaman's and marine hospitals and international health relations including sanitary regulations and administration of programmes with the cooperation of World Health Organization, UNICEF and other international agencies. The Government of India also promotes standards in medical practice and education through a number of statutory councils under Central legislation, such as the Medical Council of India, the Dental Council of India, the Indian Nursing Council and the Pharmacy Council of India.

The emerging relationship between the Centre and the State is a product not only of Constitutional provisions and their interpretations but of national exigencies and developmental process in the field of health. The requirements of the welfare state and the formulation of economic and social policies and programmes involve coordination and planning on a national scale. This has naturally meant a new approach and the adoption of extra-constitutional devices for regulating Centre-State relationship.

There has been a growing feeling about Central in-roads into fields of State powers and functions and it has been alleged that the process of planning and plan financing has virtually reduced the State Governments to the position of field agencies of the Government of India.

Family planning policy has deep-rooted repercussions. If there is forced planning imposed on the people of the country by the Government, the result may be resistance against the policy and even displacement of the government. The Congress party in power declared its family planning policy in 1975 and executed its policies through exigency. The result was frustration, terror and revolt against the Congress Government.

The Election of 1977 led to the displacement of the Congress Party at the Centre by the Janata Party. The defeat of the Congress Party at the Centre is ascribed to some of its policies such as family planning, compulsory sterilization, demolition of property, undue elevation of certain persons in political life and rising prices of essential commodities.

Now that the Congress Party is back in power, it appears to be a little wary in its approach to problems.

How much success shall be achieved in the implementation of the Sixth Five-Year Plan, including the 20-Point Programme, is yet to be seen.

* * *

The foregoing exposition of Centre-State relations would appear to be rather lengthy and showing a great concern with the constitutional aspect. But in a geopolitical account it was necessary to examine the constitutional set up in order to understand the reality of the situation.

It would be clear by now that the Indian Constitution is federal in form but unitary in substance. The shaping of the unitary form has been more or less a historical evolution since the pre-historic era -- from the Chakarvarty Rajas down to the Mughal and the British periods. The age-long traditions, the cumulative and amalgamative culture of centuries, the geographical position and expanse and above all the compelling necessities of common defence and preservation demand a unitary complex for the country.

The bitter experience of the partitioning of the sub-continent into India and Pakistan, made it all the more necessary that India should have a unitary complex. At present when disruptive forces, whether provoked by some

foreign powers or not, are already surfacing, we would only be duped to plead for more federal powers for the States, the recent utterance of the President of India notwithstanding.[17] How would the non-viable States, such as Jammu and Kashmir, and those of the north-eastern region, which are heavily subsidised by the Centre, benefit by more federal powers? Federalism may create many obstacles in the development of the country as a whole. The affluent or the politically dominant States may starve or exploit the lesser ones.

Centrality of administration, which is the theme of this work, is the need of the hour and shall continue to be so for a long time to come. It is necessary for the implementation of the Sixth Five-Year Plan and the long run national economic planning comprising manifold spheres such as agriculture, multi-purpose projects, industry and trade. Besides knitting the basic bonds of defence, communication and foreign policy, centrality of administration is required to combat the divisive forces of regionalism, ethnic and linguistic segregations, and communal, religious and caste fanaticism.

Centre-State relations have a direct relation with the national goal of socialism. The scarcity of total national resources and their present inequitable distribution

calls for a greater central governance if the aim is to provide equal life chances for all.

The Gandhian principle of non-violence in this context only means that even the sharpest disputes should be settled, as far as possible, by negotiations such as to give only one and very example, the Punjab-Haryana-Rajasthan accord on sharing the waters of Ravi-Beas.

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1. Maheshwari, B.L. (Ed.), Centre-State Relations in the Seventies (Calcutta, 1973), p.iv.

2. As for example, the late G.B.Pant, a powerful Home Minister in the early years of Independence, contributed in cutting the DMK Party to its proper size when it bloated its separatist agitation to the brink of sucession of Tamil Nadu. During Mr. Nehru's regime, influential Sikh leaders such as Master Tara Singh and Sant Fateh Singh ultimately brought down their demand for a separate State (Khalistan) to a Punjabi Suba.

3. The Industries (Development and Regulation) Act, 1951, was enacted by the Parliament after a declaration. The Act has brought many vital and nation-building industries under the purview of Parliamentary legislation.

4. Jain, S.N. and others (Ed.), The Union and the States (Delhi, 1972), pp.39-40.

5. Tamil Nadu Ultimatum to Centre, The Times of India, 8 July, 1971.

6. Maheshwari, B.L. (Ed.), op. cit., pp.20-21.

7. ibid., p.21.

8. Indian Administrative Reforms Commission, Report on Centre-State Relationship (Delhi, Manager of Publications, 1969), Vol.I, pp.237-38.

9. Maheshwari, S.R., The Centre-State Consultative Machinery in India, Indian Journal of Public Administration, 1970, 16 (3), p.439.

10. Constitution of India, Seventh Schedule.

11. Santhanam, K., Union-State Relations in India, (New Delhi, 1960).

12. Jain, S.N. and others, op. cit., p.140.

13. Weiner, M., 'A Note on Communication and Development in India', Communication and Change in the Developing Countries, edited by Daniel Larner and Wilber Schramm, 1967.

14. Rao, K.L., "A National River Grid with a Great Feeder Canal", The Hindu Weekly Magazine (August 24, 1969).

15. Jain, S.N., op. cit., pp.178-79.

16. ARC, Final Report of the Study Team on the Machinery for Planning, Chapter VII, (Manager of Publications, Government of India, New Delhi).

17. The Hindustan Times 10 November, 1981. The President, it seems, alluded to financial rather than administrative power.

CHAPTER VII

POLITICAL PARTIES AND ELECTORAL BEHAVIOUR

After the discussion of the Centre-State relations, it seems appropriate to examine the status of political parties and the electoral behaviour -- for this would indicate the measure of political stability of the country and also the elements of unity and disunity in the Indian political scenario.

Elections, in the words of Sirsikar, 'have become a part and parcel of the Indian political life [and] are now taken for granted'.[1] As long as the Indian political system survives in its present form, elections will continue to be one of its essential characteristics. If they cease to be central to the system, then the system itself will be threatened, and probably will not endure long. If for one reason or the other the system is altered fundamentally, elections will then have a different role and significance, that is if they are preserved at all in a meaningful way.

In spite of many pressures and difficulties, the Indian political system has been functioning well and seems to be developing stronger roots. Within this system the electoral process has functioned with increasing effectiveness and acceptance, and the Indian voter seems to be developing

a surprising degree of maturity and sophistication. At least it is developing, to quote one writer, 'a responsible electorate, if not a really mature and sophisticated one'.[2]

A study of elections is bound to involve such questions as the relations between the polity and the society, the various levels and the different idioms of Indian politics, and the roles and relationships of 'tradition' and 'modernity'. It is obvious that the Indian polity is more 'modern' than the society. If the polity is considered in terms of a vertical organization, it becomes more 'modern' the higher one goes in the political hierarchy. Hence politics at the state and regional levels is more 'modern' than at the district and local levels, and less 'modern' in urban than in the rural areas. So too with the 'idioms' of Indian political life. What W.H.Morris-Jones has called the 'traditional' and to some extent the 'saintly' idioms are found more commonly at local levels and in rural areas, while the 'modern' idiom prevails at the national level, and also the states' level.[3]

The roles of parties and their interactions are central to any study of elections. As Duverger has observed, 'the electoral system affects the political life of a country mainly through the parties.[4]

We may now take note of the fact that for three decades after Independence, the Indian National Congress ruled the roast (see Maps 25 to 28). Indian politics evolved around this dominent party and the several small opposition parties played only a restricted role during this period. A total of 77 political parties contested the First General Election in 1952 (Fig.26), 52 in the Second General Election (1957) (Fig.27), 34 in the Third General Election (1962) (Fig.28), and 35 in the Fourth General Election (1967) (Fig.29). In the Subsequent General Elections of 1971, 1977 and 1980, the number of parties has fluctuated around 15 (Maps 30, 31 and 32). In general, the regional, religious, ethnic, linguistic, social and cultural diversities of the Indian society accounts for the multiplicity of political parties.[5] It may be said that by the time of the Third General Elections, political opinions were essentially crystallized in 15 national and local parties representing various tendencies.[6]

As can be seen, some of the parties are largely confined to a single region or community, such as the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam in Tamil Nadu, the Muslim League in Kerala, the Akali Dal in Punjab, the Peasant and Workers Party in Maharashtra, the All Party Hill Leaders Conference in Assam and the Ganatantra Parishad in Orissa.

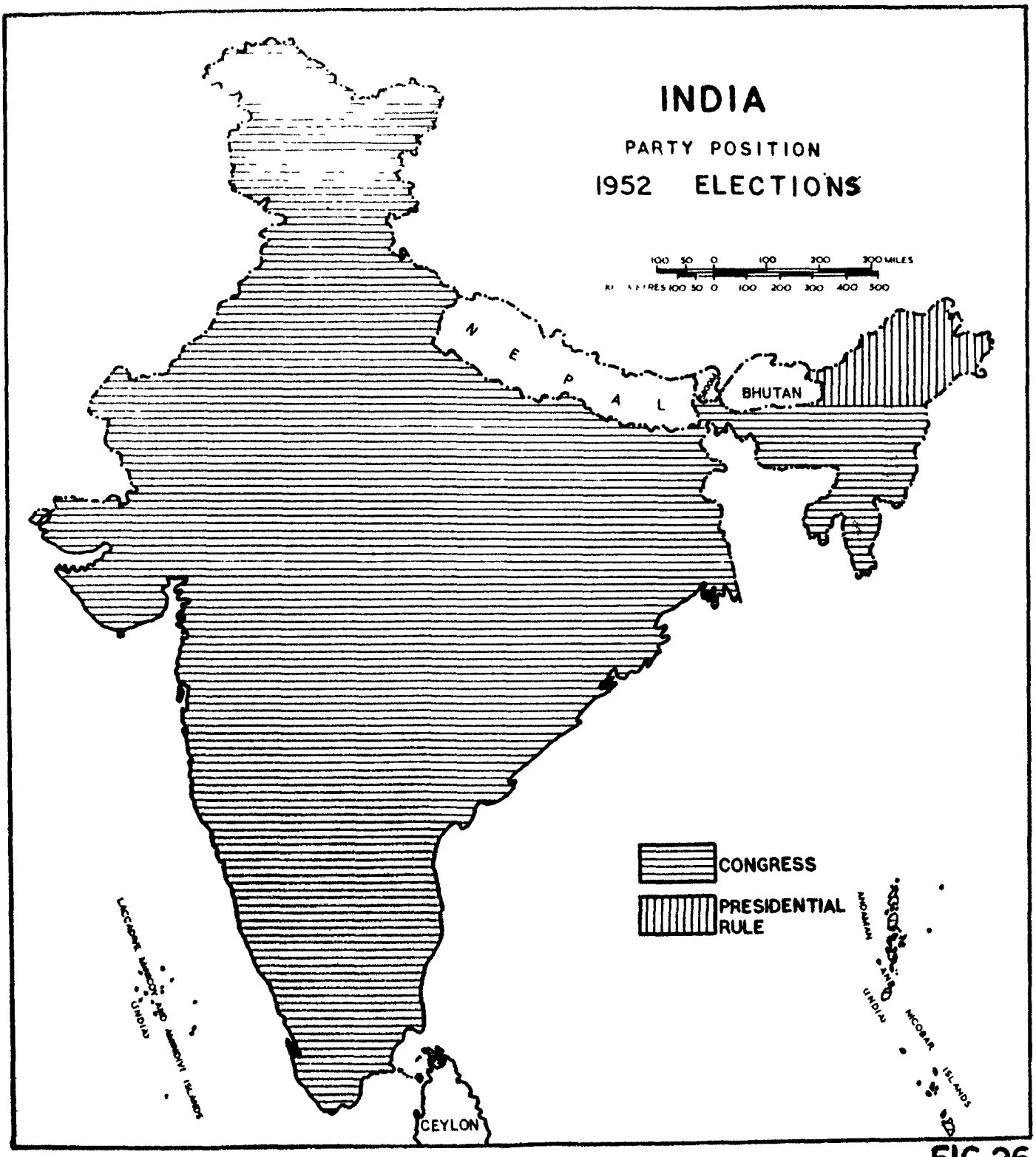
INDIA
PARTY POSITION
1952 ELECTIONS
100 50 0 100 200 300 MILES
KILOMETRES 100 50 0 100 200 300 400 500
NEPAL
BHUTAN
CONGRESS
PRESIDENTIAL RULE
CEYLON
ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS

FIG. 26

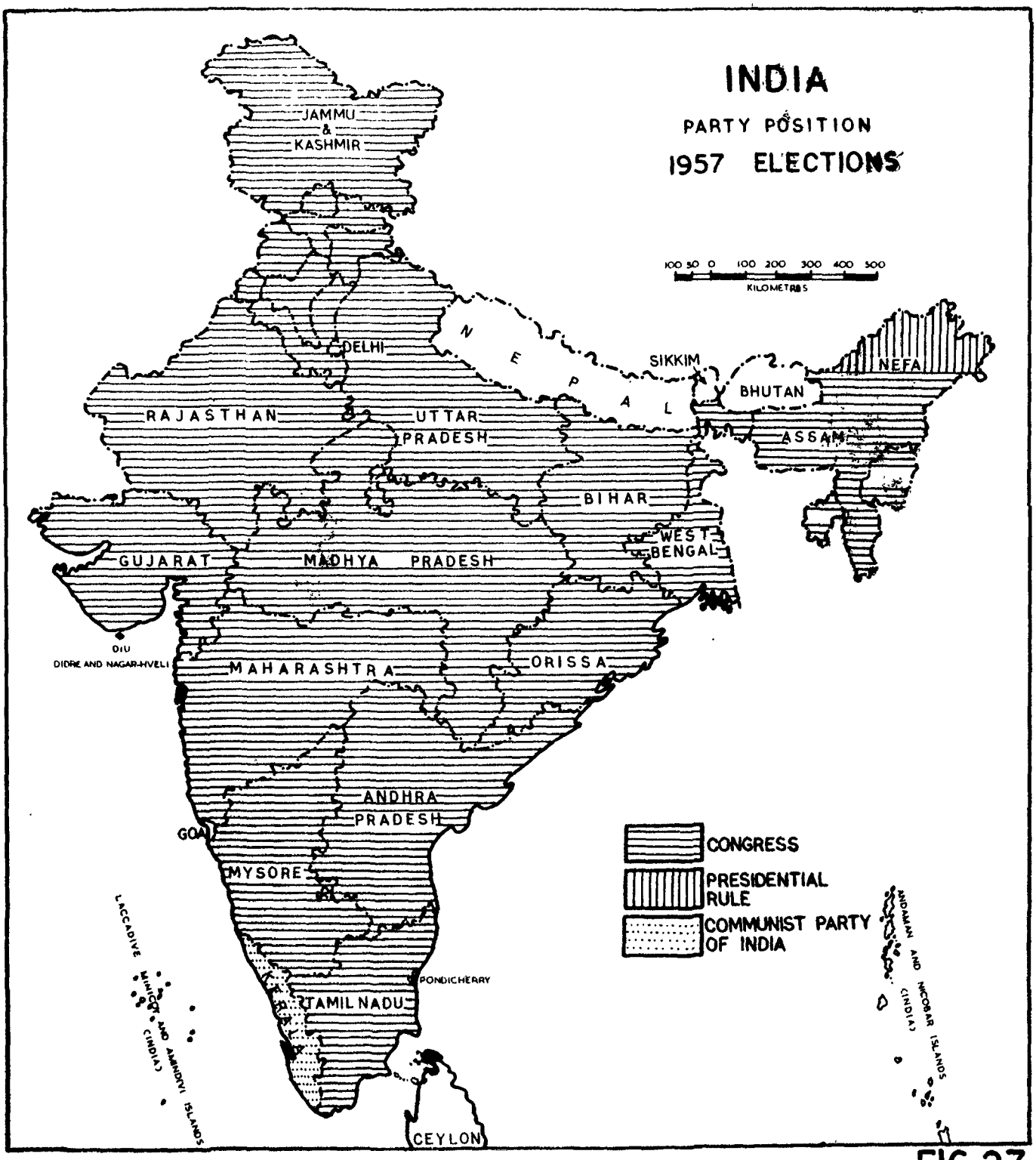
INDIA
PARTY POSITION
1957 ELECTIONS
100 50 0 100 200 300 400 500
KILOMETRES
JAMMU & KASHMIR
DELHI
NEPAL
SIKKIM
BHUTAN
NEFA
ASSAM
RAJASTHAN
UTTAR PRADESH
BIHAR
WEST BENGAL
GUJARAT
MADHYA PRADESH
DIU
DIDRE AND NAGAR-HVELI
MAHARASHTRA
ORISSA
ANDHRA PRADESH
GOA
MYSORE
PONDICHERRY
TAMIL NADU
KERALA
CEYLON
LACCADIVE MINICOY AND AMINDIVI ISLANDS (INDIA)
ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS (INDIA)
CONGRESS
PRESIDENTIAL RULE
COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA

FIG.27

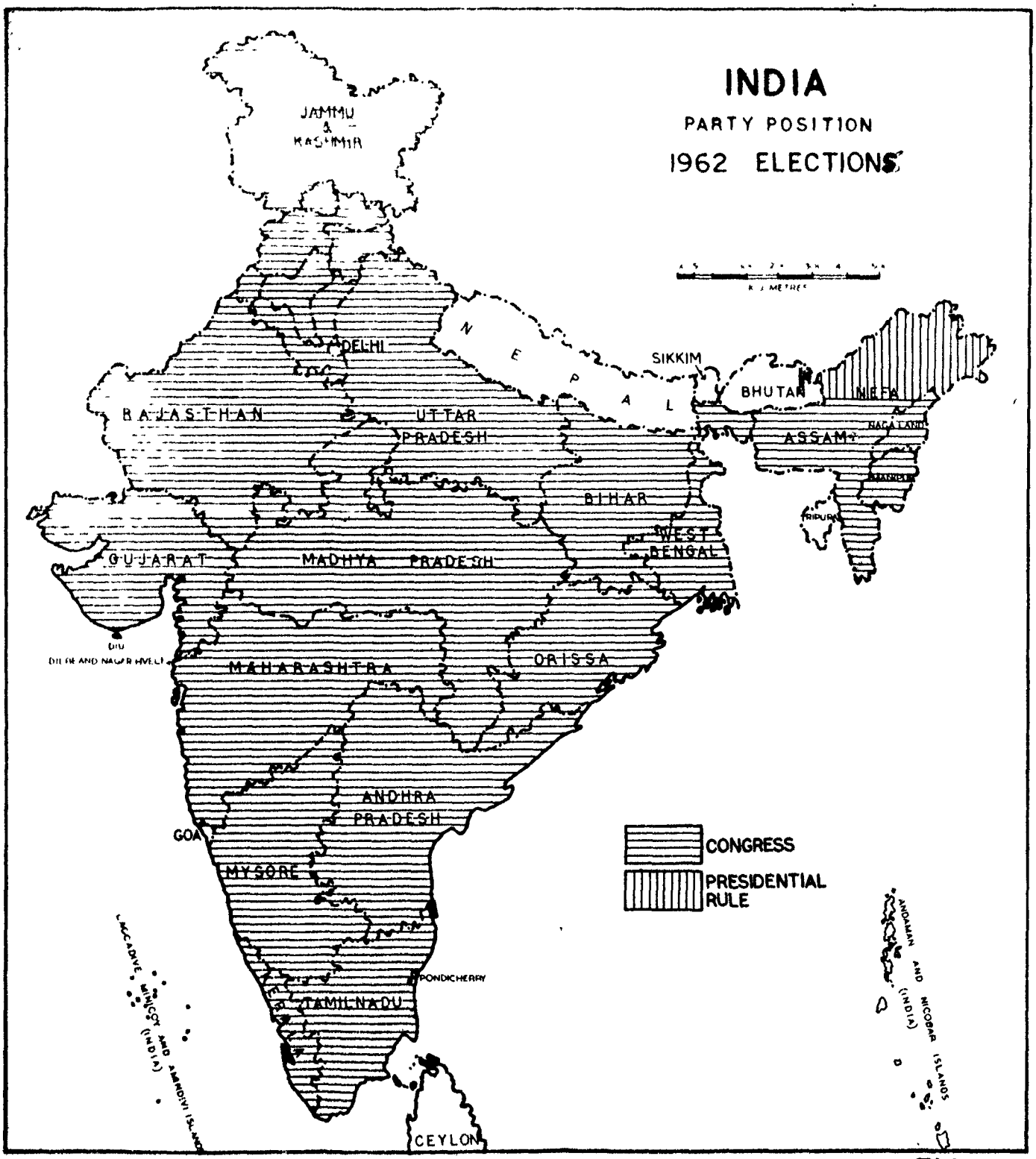
INDIA
PARTY POSITION
1962 ELECTIONS
JAMMU & KASHMIR
DELHI
RAJASTHAN
UTTAR PRADESH
NEPAL
SIKKIM
BHUTAN
NEFA
ASSAM
NAGALAND
MANIPUR
TRIPURA
BIHAR
WEST BENGAL
GUJARAT
MADHYA PRADESH
DIU
DIU AND NAGAR HAVELI
MAHARASHTRA
ORISSA
ANDHRA PRADESH
GOA
MYSORE
PONDICHERRY
TAMILNADU
CEYLON
LACCADIVE, MINICOY AND AMINDIVI ISLANDS (INDIA)
ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS (INDIA)
CONGRESS
PRESIDENTIAL RULE

FIG. 28

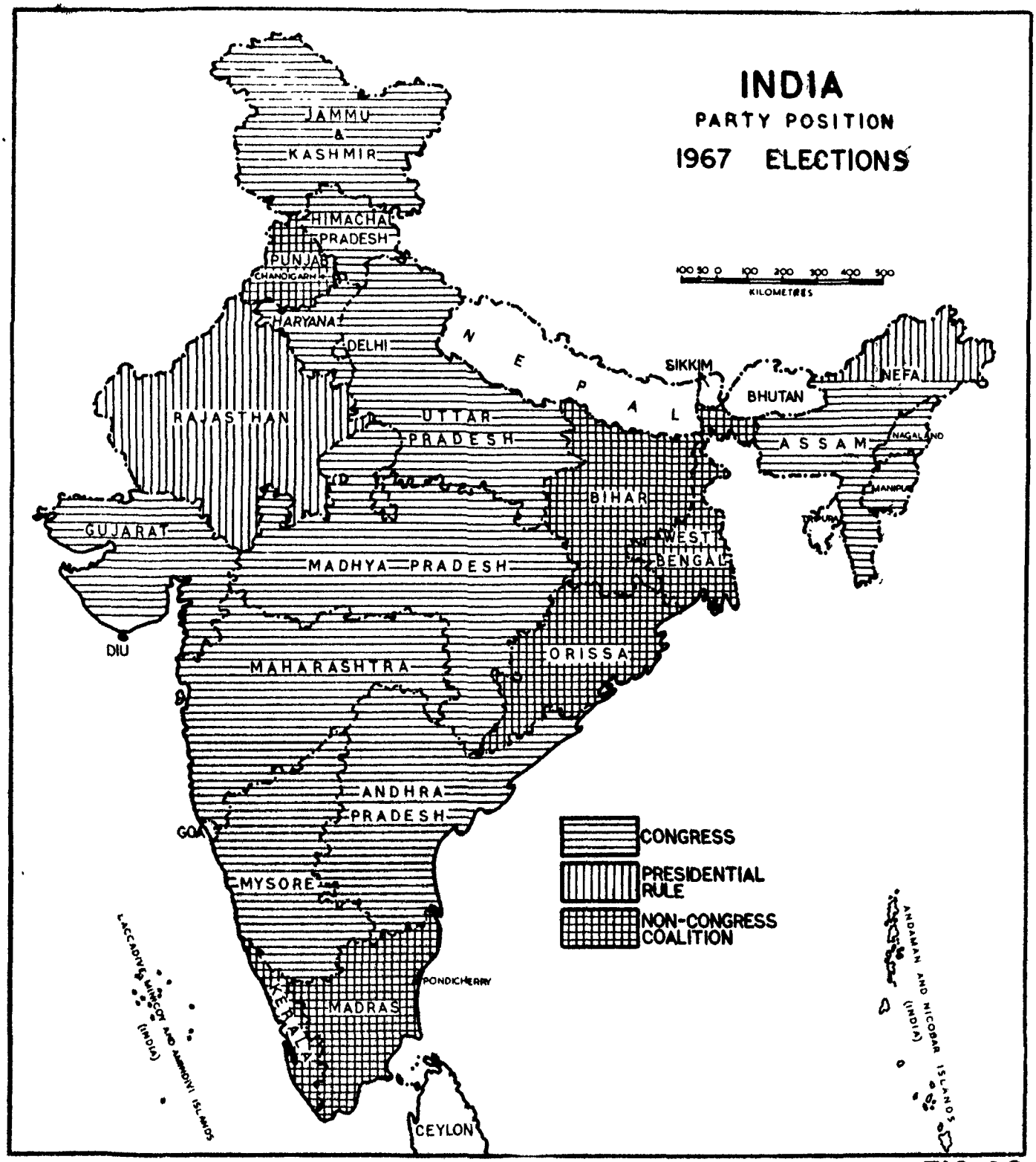
INDIA
PARTY POSITION
1967 ELECTIONS
100 50 0 100 200 300 400 500
KILOMETRES
JAMMU & KASHMIR
HIMACHAL PRADESH
PUNJAB
CHANDIGARH
HARYANA
DELHI
RAJASTHAN
UTTAR PRADESH
NEPAL
SIKKIM
BHUTAN
NEFA
ASSAM
NAGALAND
MANIPUR
TRIPURA
BIHAR
WEST BENGAL
GUJARAT
DIU
MADHYA PRADESH
ORISSA
MAHARASHTRA
ANDHRA PRADESH
GOA
MYSORE
PONDICHERRY
KERALA
MADRAS
CEYLON
LACCADIVE, MINICOY AND AMINDIVI ISLANDS (INDIA)
ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS (INDIA)
CONGRESS
PRESIDENTIAL RULE
NON-CONGRESS COALITION

FIG.29

The most important national party that is the Congress has represented a kind of historical consensus and enjoyed a continuous basis of support and trust among the masses, excepting a brief period (1977-1980) and that too only in North India. The tendency of the political parties was to promise dramatic improvements to bring social justice, to augment economic development and to improve the lot of India's millions. The result was to burden the Congress Party with the great weight of unfulfilled hopes of those who believed that independence would automatically make India prosperous and give every one a new chance in life. The main objectives of the Congress Party since independence have been to achieve the goal of Socialism. It may be said that in the 30 years during which the party was in power it achieved only limited success but did lay down the foundations of a liberal welfare state.

Among the opposition parties, the Communist Party of India has the longest record of existence. It has a particular stronghold in Kerala and West Bengal. The party split into C.P.I. (Moscow-oriented) and C.P.I. (Marxit) (Chinese-oriented) in 1964. It appears that in the democratic parliamentary processes operating in India, Communism itself has undergone radical changes in its ideology and strategy. Besides the two Communist Parties, the more

important leftist parties are the Praja Socialist Party (PSP), the Samyukta Socialist Party (SSP) the Peasant and Workers Party, the Revolutionary Socialist Party and the Forward Bloc.

Among the rightist parties, the Swatantra Party and the Jana Sangh Party gained importance in the Fourth General Election. The former is conservative and anti-Communist and is opposed to many of the socialist policies of the Congress Party. It was formed to oppose cooperative farming measures, but favoured increased state participation in industrial sectors. It opposed expropriation in any form, rejected joint cooperative farming, bureaucratic management of the rural economy, heavy taxation, abnormal deficit financing, and foreign loans which is considered beyond the capacity of the country to repay.[7] The Jana Sangh Party professed Secularism but has been branded as a communal Hindu party, and the following that it has is given as a justification of the allegation.

Other rightist parties include the Muslim League, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), and the Janta Party. There are also several Congress dissident groups which are mostly rightist in their ideologies. There have always been independent members in the Parliament but their strength has declined with each election.

For three decades after Independence the role of the opposition parties was restricted to influencing the policies of the ruling party rather than to challenge its monopoly of power. Until the Fourth General Election (1967) the pattern of the distribution of Lok Sabha seats changed very little.

It was in the Fourth General Election (1967) that the dominance of the Congress Party in Lok Sabha was curtailed (from 358 to 280 seats) and several other parties significantly increased their strength. In the Fifth General Election (1971) the Congress once again regained its overwhelming dominance. The Sixth General Election (1977), however, turned the tables against the Congress and it could win only 153 seats in a House of 544 members. The majority of seats (299) were won by the Janata Party which had been formed by the amalgamation of some parties. The pendulum swung once again in the Seventh Election (1980) when the Congress returned to power with more than two-thirds majority. The then ruling party (Janata Party) was relegated to the fourth position, while the second and third positions were taken by the Lok Dal and the C.P.M.

We may now give a brief analysis of the successive General Elections for Lok Sabha in independent India.

In the First General Election (1952), the Congress Party gained 45 per cent of the total votes but secured 74.43 per cent of the seats, whereas the Socialist Party received 10.6 per cent of the votes but secured only 2.4 per cent of the seats. Other important opposition parties were the Communist Party of India and the Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party. Their strongholds were Hyderabad, Madras, Orissa and the tribal areas of Bihar, Madhya Bharat, Rajasthan and Travancore-Cochin, all of which were formerly under princely rulers. As many as 83 seats (about 15 per cent) of the seats were secured by Independent candidates, which shows that a sufficient portion of the voters had no particular attachment to political parties. Indian voters were unwilling to support any party.

In the Second General Election (1957), the people seem to have voted with more confidence, greater understanding and better judgment than they apparently did in 1952. While the Congress Party gained only 47.78 per cent of the votes polled, it secured 75.1 per cent of the seats. The Communist Party of India and the Praja Socialist Party were the strongest opposition parties. The opposition was concentrated in Maharashtra (coastal and bilingual area) and the coastal states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Orissa and West Bengal. Opposition proved weakest in the interior

and under-developed areas of Madhya Pradesh and in Punjab, eastern Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. In addition to the national opposition parties, the local and regional parties, such as the Ganatantra Parishad in Orissa, the People's Democratic Front in Andhra Pradesh and the Peasant and Worker Party in Maharashtra showed significant strength. The independents, although reduced in number, were still backed by many voters in Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa and Kerala.

In the Third General Election (1962) the Congress Party secured 44.72 per cent of the total votes cast and gained 73.03 per cent of the Lok Sabha seats. It lost some seats in Madhya Pradesh, where it had had captured 100 per cent of the seats in the previous election. It, however, gained seats in Maharashtra and gained more support from the coastal states of Maharashtra, Gujarat, West Bengal, Orissa and Tamil Nadu.[8] These areas, with the exception of Orissa, are the most industrialized and modernized parts of the country. The Congress Party lost some support in some remote areas of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan and Karnataka. The Communist Party of India with 29 seats was next only to the Congress Party in strength. During this election the Swatantra and the DMK (in Tamil Nadu) emerged as new parties and the Jana Sangh, in the north, increased its strength in the parliament.

In the Fourth General Election (1967), elections were held for the first time in Jammu and Kashmir, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, and the Laccadive, Minicoy, and Amindivi Islands. Compared to the Third General Election, although the total number of votes secured by the Congress Party declined by only five per cent (from 44.75 to 39.57 per cent), the party secured only 282 seats as compared with 361 in 1962. The party had a majority of 44, which was further threatened by under-currents of factionalism within the party. The Congress Party had won only 54.24 per cent of the Lok Sabha seats and it may be an index of the prevailing dissatisfaction of the voters that five important ministers, three state ministers and six deputy ministers were defeated. The Swatantra and the Jana Sangh parties increased from 18 to 44 and 12 to 35 respectively, although they gained only 5.03 and 4.07 per cent of the votes polled. The Swatantra Party's gains were in Gujarat, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, all of which had a number of erstwhile princely States. The Jana Sangh won most of its seats in the Hindi-dominated areas but also in some of the former princely States. The C.P.I.M. won 42 seats, mostly in Kerala and West Bengal. The Socialist Party in Bihar and the DMK party in Tamil Nadu showed gains. The

Congress Party lost heavily in the Gangetic plain, in western and central India, along the northeastern coast in the Assam hill areas, and in the deep south. It is significant to note that no other geographical region showed as much politically turbulence as the north.

In the Fifth General Elections (1971) the Congress Party regained its former position. It captured 355 seats as against 26 by C.P.I. (M) 24 by C.P.I., 16 by Jan Sangh and a few by others (Fig.30).

The Sixth General Elections (1977) came as a great shock to the Congress Party and one commentator went to the extent of saying that the leader of the Party, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, had been "thrown into the dust-bin of history". The strength of the party had been reduced to 153 while the Janata Party with 299 seats had emerged as the dominant party (Fig.31). Mrs. Gandhi herself had been defeated. The chief reasons of the set back suffered by the Congress Party are given as the harsh measures adopted by her government during the "Emergency", rampant corruption and inflation. While there may have been some truth to a greater or lesser degree in each of these allegations, it is true that some of the opposition parties had surreptitiously but successfully conducted a propaganda (including whisper campaigns) against Mrs. Gandhi.

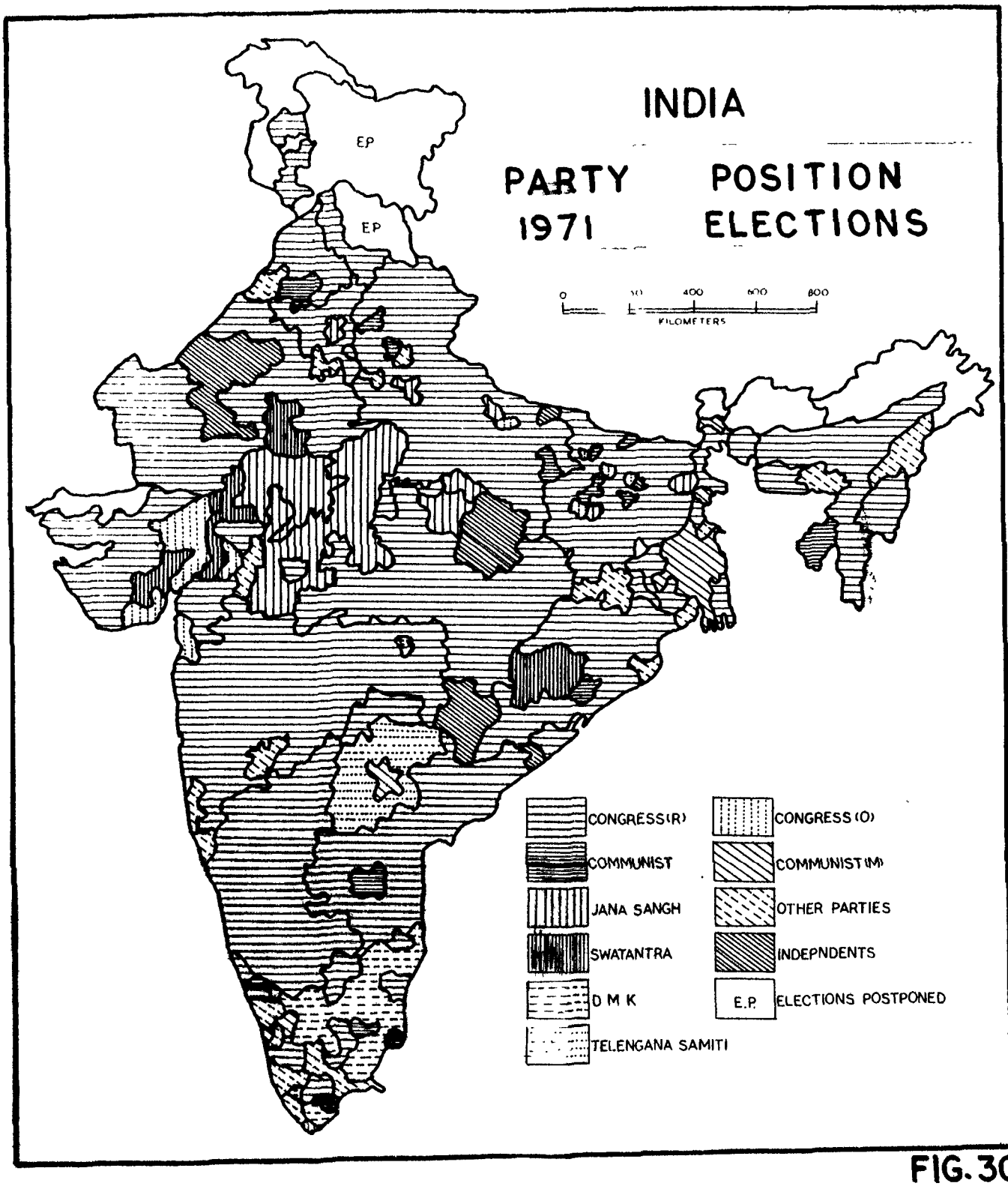
INDIA
PARTY POSITION
1971 ELECTIONS
E.P
E.P
0
400
600
800
KILOMETERS
CONGRESS(R)
CONGRESS (O)
COMMUNIST
COMMUNIST (M)
JANA SANGH
OTHER PARTIES
SWATANTRA
INDEPNDENTS
D M K
E.P. ELECTIONS POSTPONED
TELENGANA SAMITI

FIG. 30

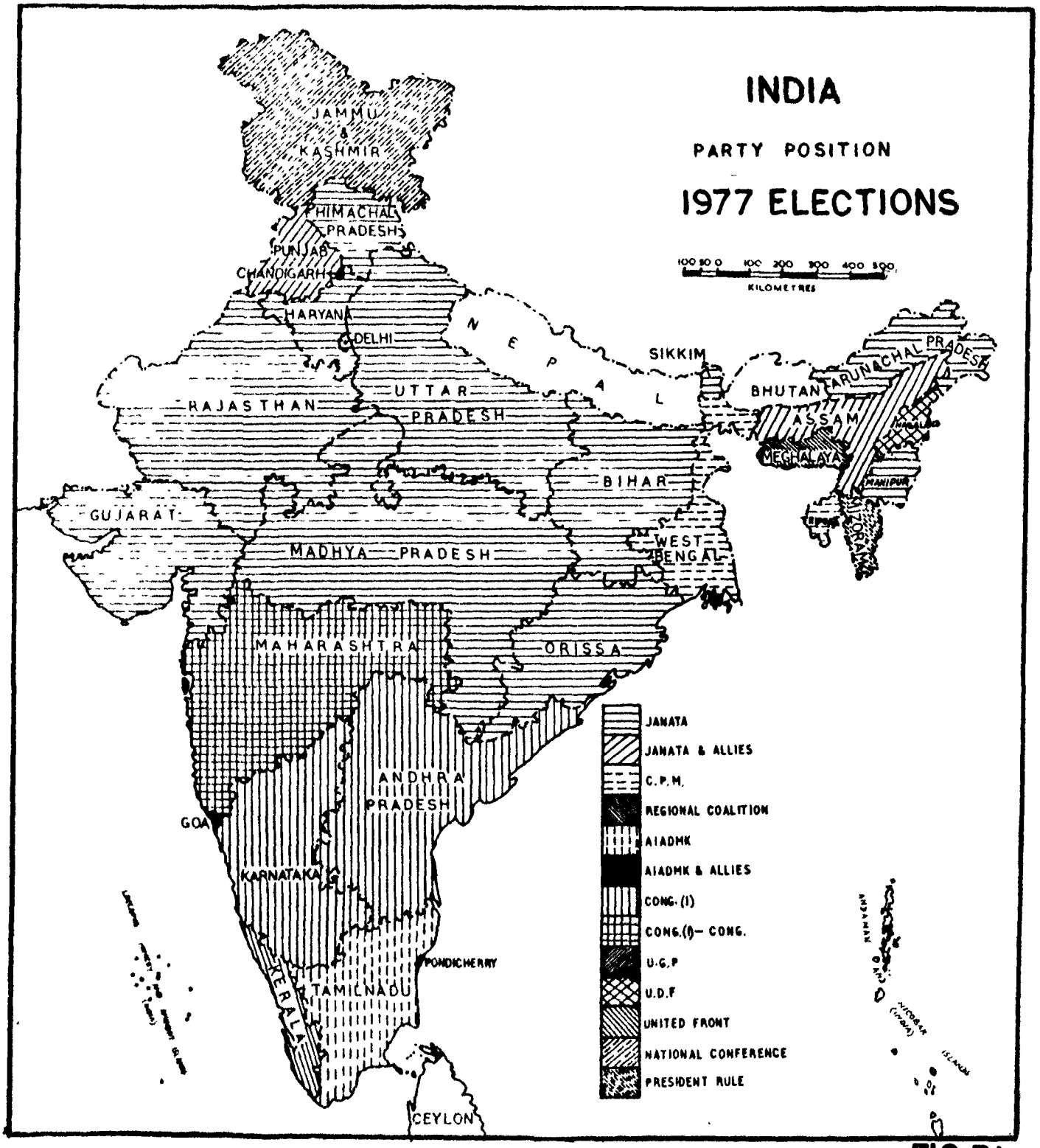
INDIA
PARTY POSITION
1977 ELECTIONS
100 50 0 100 200 300 400 500
KILOMETRES
JAMMU & KASHMIR
HIMACHAL PRADESH
PUNJAB
CHANDIGARH
HARYANA
DELHI
RAJASTHAN
UTTAR PRADESH
NEPAL
SIKKIM
BHUTAN
ARUNACHAL PRADESH
ASSAM
MEGHALAYA
MANIPUR
TRIPURA
MIZORAM
BIHAR
WEST BENGAL
GUJARAT
MADHYA PRADESH
MAHARASHTRA
ORISSA
ANDHRA PRADESH
GOA
KARNATAKA
KERALA
TAMILNADU
PONDICHERRY
CEYLON
JANATA
JANATA & ALLIES
C.P.M.
REGIONAL COALITION
AIADMK
AIADMK & ALLIES
CONG. (I)
CONG.(I)– CONG.
U.G.P
U.D.F
UNITED FRONT
NATIONAL CONFERENCE
PRESIDENT RULE

FIG. 31

In the Seventh General Elections (1980) the nemesis was on the Janata Party which during the short period of its rule exhibited not only a disgraceful in-fighting but also a very high degree of incompetency in governing the country and a great love for the loaves and fishes of office. The electorate which in the previous election had rejected Mrs. Gandhi out of anger was now in search of its own Security. The Janta Party was dislodged and Mrs. Gandhi and her Party were restored to power (Fig.32).

In the 1980 elections the Congress Party had won 353 seats followed by Lok Dal (41); C.P.M. (36); Janata (31); Congress (U) (13); C.P.I. (11); Independents (9) and other parties (35) (Table XVIII).

From the foregoing account it may appear that the Indian electorate has been erratic from one election to the other. However, another view which may be taken that whenever it has been disillusioned with a party which has failed to solve its immediate problems, it has administered severe punishment to it and rejected it.

As for participation in the electoral process, the three elections during 1970-80 show a high degree of consistency on the part of the electorate, which may be considered as a sign of maturity.

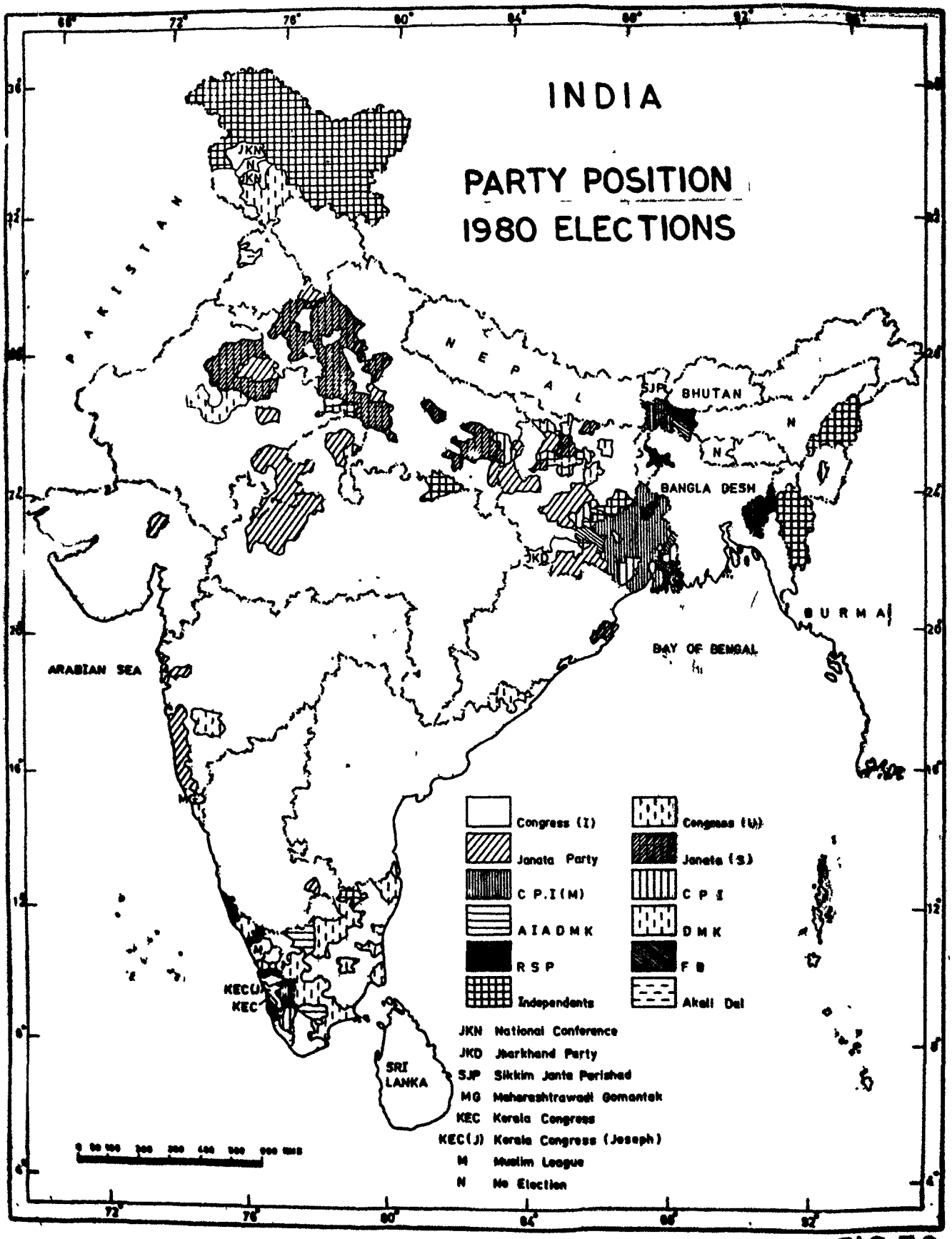
INDIA
PARTY POSITION
1980 ELECTIONS
PAKISTAN
NEPAL
BHUTAN
BANGLA DESH
BURMA
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BENGAL
SRI LANKA
JKN
JKD
SJP
KEC
KEC(J)
Congress (I)
Janata Party
C P.I(M)
A I A D M K
R S P
Independents
Congress (U)
Janata (S)
C P I
D M K
F B
Akali Dal
JKN National Conference
JKD Jharkhand Party
SJP Sikkim Janta Parishad
MG Maharashtrawadi Gomantak
KEC Kerala Congress
KEC(J) Kerala Congress (Joseph)
M Muslim League
N No Election

FIG.32

TABLE XVIII

Party performance in January 1980 and Gain/ Losses since 1971

Party	No. of seats won	Percentage	Seats won in 1977	Gain/Loss of seats 1977-80	Gain/Loss of seats 1971-77
Congress I	353	66.72	154	+199	-209
Congress U	13	2.46	-	+ 13*	-
Janata	31	5.86	298	-267	+246
Lok Dal	41	7.76	-	+ 41	-
C.P.M.	36	6.80	22	+ 14	- 3
C.P.I.	11	2.08	7	+ 4	- 16
Other Parties	35	6.62	51	- 16	+ 9
Independents	9	1.70	10	- 1	- 10
Total	529*	100.00	542	- 13	+ 17

*Polling could not take place in 13 Parliamentary Constituencies in 1980. This also explains the discrepency of 13 Seats in Gain/Loss of parties since 1977.

Source: Singh, C.P., 1980, The Seventh Parliamentary Elections in India: A Geographical Analysis, ICSSR Research Project Report, p.38.

Now we may turn our attention to certain features of the Seventh General Elections (1980).

First, the percentage of voter participation in 1980 was lower than that in 1977 but higher than that in 1971, which may be taken as one barometer of popular dissatisfaction with a party.

Secondly, if we classify voter turn-out as high, medium and low we find that there are nine areas where the turn-out was high.[Fn.1] These are generally those areas where the level of economic development is high on account of their agricultural and/or industrial progress. They have a high density of population and a good measure of connectivity. In contrast, there are five areas of low turn-out.[Fn.2] These areas are less fertile, economically backward and have more illetracy and poverty. The tribal areas fall in this group. The areas where voter turn-out was moderate appear as a belt.[Fn.3] These are generally those areas where economic development is rather moderate.

Fn.1. These are (i) Punjab, Haryana and adjoining party of neighbouring States; (ii) north-central Bihar; (iii) a large part of West Bengal; (iv) Cauvery delta, coastal plain of Tamil Nadu; (v) north Malabar coast; (vi) Krishna-Godavari basins of Andhra Pradesh; (vii) Maharashtra-Karnataka plateau; (viii) Vidarbha in Madhya Pradesh; and (ix) southern Gujarat.

Fn.2. These are (i) tribal areas of Chhota Nagpur, eastern Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Andhra Pradesh; (ii) central and northern Uttar Pradesh; (iii) the Chambal region; (iv) southwestern Rajasthan; and (v) central Karnatka-Telengena Plateau.

Fn.3. This belt, lying between northern India and southern India, stretches from Indo-Pakistan border in the west to Andhra coast in the east.

Thirdly, the percentage of invalid votes does indicated to some extent the level of literacy and development in the various areas. When we analyse the 1980 election on this basis, we find that there is an inverse ratio between voter-turn out and invalid votes -- that is in areas where electoral participation is high the percentage of invalid votes is low and vice versa.

Fourthly, an analysis of votes constituency-wise shows that even though the Congress Party had had a sweeping victory in winning the seats, the degree of competition between or amongst the parties was much keener than in the previous election.

Fifthly, although the Congress Party did win a more than two-thirds majority in the Lok Sabha, it received less support in the hub of the country -- which is located in the Hindi-speaking belt -- than in the surrounding and the peripheral areas. However, it did reduce the national level parties to the level of regional parties: the Janata Party with small bases in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra; the Lok Dal circumscribed in Orissa, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Rajasthan; the C.P.I.(M) confined to Tripura, West Bengal and Kerala; the C.P.I. restricted to Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra and Tamil Nadu.

Thus the Congress has emerged as the most dominant party both in terms of voters' representation and spatial spread.

* * *

From the viewpoint of centrality of administration it may be good thing that the Congress has come on top dwarfing all the other political parties. It may be helpful factor in the implementation of the economic plans and programmes without which the country must fall on bad days. However it would be short-sighted on the part of the Congress Party to wish for the complete liquidation of the regional parties for the latter do play a role in fulfilling the aspirations of the local people and ensure federal spirit of the Constitution.

As for building up socialism in the country, we have already referred to the implementation of the economic plans and programmes. A large segment of the Sixth Five-Year Plan is aimed at "growth with stability", "removal of poverty", "health care for all", correction of regional imbalances and so on. It now remains for ruling party which has emerged out of the woods in 1980 elections to effectuate the economic and social programmes.

The Gandhian approach to democracy -- that is democracy at the grass-root level in the form of Panchayati Raj -- must remain a pipe-dream for quite some time to come because of constraints such as illiteracy, politicization of the Panchayats, social cleavages and last, but not the least, lack of financial resources.

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CHAPTER VIII

UNITY AND DISUNITY

India is a vast country with a huge population. The country shows a great diversification in relief and climate. Besides these differentiations, there are marked cultural diversities. And of course there are the well known economic and social stratifications in the Indian society.

THE ROLE OF GEOGRAPHY IN THE UNITY OF INDIA

"Geographically", to quote Spate, "India is an intelligible isolate. The huge salient of the Peninsula... strikes the eye at once; and on the inland borders are the ramparts and fosses are the giant ranges which ... wall off the sub-continent"[1].

The sub-continent is clearly defined on almost all sides. The northern mountainous belt containing long and bold ranges and some of the loftiest peaks in the world.

The barrier aspect of the mountains is somewhat reduced by the circumstance of their being crossed even in the difficult sections by some of India's largest rivers. The mountains offer a few passes, the better known of which

are the Gilgit, Babusar, Skardu, Baroghil and Kargil in the northeastern portion and the Khyber, Tochi and Bolan passes in the western part.

The mountains are an unmistakable landmark which physically outline the Indian sub-continent. However, considering that India has derived most of its peoples, its languages, religions, and empires from across these mountains, such terms as 'barrier', 'rampart', 'a providential guardian'[2], are exaggerations of a truth.

The seas in the south, outline the Indian peninsula even more precisely, than the mountains in the north, but like the mountains they too have failed to isolate India from the rest of the world.

Thus, although the mountains and the seas are not the isolating barriers that many seem to believe, they clearly outline the Indian sub-continent and impart to it a natural unity. The Indian climate, which is so characteristically dominated by the rhythm of the monsoons, also tends to reinforce that unity. Similarly, although the sub-continent has continually received waves of migration influx, and has been time and again conquered and colonized by peoples of very different cultural origins, it has over its long history produced within its confines, if not a

blend, then at least a distinctive cultural complex. Combining with the natural features this also imparts to the sub-continent a certain degree of geographical unity which distinguishes it from the neighbouring lands.

GEOGRAPHIC FACTORS AND DIVERSITIES

Although there is little doubt about the distinctiveness of the geographic kaleidoscope that is India, it would be fallacious to assume that because India exhibits a degree of geographic unity it should also have a commensurate measure of political unity. On the contrary, subsequent examination of Indian history will show that a chronic political disunity is itself a persistent feature of Indian geography -- if not, indeed, a product of it.[3] Pakistan and then Bangladesh were but a current expressions of this disunity.

We may now examine in some detail a few factors which have accounted for disunity in India.

(i) The Vast Size

Pre-Partition India with an area of over 1.2 million sq. km. was comparable in size to the whole of Europe excluding Russia. It extended from mid-latitudes down to within a few degrees of the equator and covered a

span of nearly thirty-five degrees of longitude. More compact than Europe, its various parts, its rivers and valleys, its mountains and plains and plateaus were even more extensive than those of Europe, and quite as distinctive. Like Europe it revealed a geographic kaleidoscope of great richness and variety.

(ii) Great Distances

A factor that impeded integration was the great distances which separated the various parts of the country: over 3,200 km. from north to south and about the same between the eastern and the western extremities. The ardousness of travel between different areas was also accentuated by inhospitable terrain and extensive deserts, mountains and forests. This was particularly true of the pre-British days. Even from the geographic centre which lies somewhere in the difficult country of the dissected and forested mountain and plateau region of central India, the distances to the corners exceeded 1,600 km., a formidable stretch in a land where the slow animals, oxen and camels, still remain the most common carriers. The traditional centre of political power, which lies near Delhi, i.e. more in the northwestern quadrant, found it extremely difficult to excercise durable control over the peripheral areas.

(iii) Slow Development of Transport Routes

Separatism and centrifugalism in India were encouraged not only by the large size of the country but also by lack of transport routes until modern times. The only trans-continental highway which joined the outlying areas to the capital was the Grand Trunk road built by Sher Shah 400 years ago. The succeeding Mughul rulers used this road mainly during their military campaigns, but did not maintain it as an efficient continuous highway in times of peace. The road was reestablished and improved by the British in the nineteenth century.

The British also created a railway network and built subsidiary roads to cover other parts of the country, but even this extended system did not adequately integrate the border areas with the rest of India. In the east, Calcutta remained the terminus of the main road and railway lines, while the river-strewn delta east of the city was served by an almost local transport system. The north-south orientation of the delta distributaries and their uncertain channels, the difficulty of erecting bridges on the delta clay, and the frequent hazard of floods hampered an intimate linking of eastern Bengal with the rest of the northern plains. The transport network in the territory

now in Pakistan was also very sparse. At first the routes linked only the marginal cities of the Punjab to Peshawar in the north and to Delhi in the southeast. The route which connects Lahore to Karachi was completed at a later date, and runs along the southern margin of the Punjab, the bulk of the North-West Frontier Province, as well as Sind and Baluchistan, remained ill-supplied with transport facilities until the beginning of this century. The development of roads and railways facilitated to some degree the economic integration of the country (Figs.12 and 13).

(iv) Unequal Distribution of Wealth and Population

It is, of course, only natural to expect considerable differences in economic potential and development within an area as large and as full of variety as the Indian sub-continent (Figs.14 and 15). Differences of climate, soil and hydrography leave certain areas like the Thar desert, the rocky Deccan plateau, or the mountainous frontier agriculturally less favourable than, for example, the fertile Bengal delta, the productive Ganga plain, or the irrigated doabs of the Indus basin (Figs.8 and 9). Similarly, presence of minerals in some areas either compensated for agricultural poverty as in central India

and the Deccan or reinforced the agricultural economy as in Bihar and West Bengal (Fig.14). Unfortunately, adequate steps to ensure a more equitable distribution of wealth throughout the Indian sub-continent were not taken. The parts that felt the most discontented during the first half of this century, one of the most crucial periods in Indian history, were the marginal areas of East Bengal, the Indus plains, the Deccan. It is not surprising, therefore, that in varying degree their economic discontent did find expression in political grievances of a very serious nature.

(v) The Role of Physical Barriers

In the physical as well as the cultural sense, the sub-continent of India exhibits two distinct barrier lines. The first, also the more obvious one, is the line formed by the Vindhya and Satpura ranges and the densely forested uplands that continue east of the ranges (Fig.7), the latter being known by the historians as the 'Maha-Kantara', the great wilderness. Together, the mountain and the forest create a negative zone separating the northern lowlands from the true peninsula, the Deccan in the south.

The second barrier is the one which Spate calls 'the perennially important historical structure line ... which slants across from the Gulf of Cambay to the Delhi-

Agra region.[4] Geographically, this line is even more significant as a physical and cultural divide between the western and eastern parts of the plains. 'Although there is no ridge of high ground between the Ganga and the Indus drainage, and a very trifling change in the surface might turn the affluents of one river into another'[5], yet 'between the regions thus separated by the Aravallis (which traverses this barrier zone), there exist most striking differences both in structure and conformation'.[6]

(vi) Race and Culture

The racial geography of India reveals two significant features. Firstly, it conforms to the physical geography of the country to a degree not to be found elsewhere in Asia.[7] Secondly, it is determined in considerable measure by the religions of India.

The majority of the sub-continent's population belongs to the Caucassoid stock with Mediterranean and Alpine or Nordic traits predominating, but the restrictions on inter-marriages are more severe and widespread, and hence racial differences have tended to be more clearly localized. This is not distinctly seen in the Deccan, which is inhabited mainly by the earlier or 'palaeo-Maditerraneans', who are better recognized as the Dravidian-

speaking[8] people of the south. They can be distinguished by their very dark or chocolate pigment, black wavy hair, broad and flattish noses and a cephalic indix of 72-76.[9]

They were forced out of the fertile northern plains by a later wave of the Mediterraneans, more commonly identified as the Aryans. Their darker complexion and their defeat were possibly the main reason for their relegation to a lower caste status (i.e., virtual social isolation by other Hundus) and their long inhabitance in the poorer parts of the Indian south.

The heart of India, the country between the Indus plains and the Ganga delta, is inhabited mainly by Aryo-Dravidians. Despite biological mixing, some racial differentiation was caused and perpetuated by the mutually exogamous caste structure of Hinduism. What may be very generally called the Hindustan type 'is descended from the Aryans (the later Mediterraneans) in the male, and the Dravidians (the palaeo-Mediterraneans) in the female line... the lower classes mixing more with the aboriginals' and the difference between various sections 'corresponding substantially with the scale of social precedence'.[10] Together these various peoples combine the characteristics

of both types; their stature varies from short to medium, complexion from olive to dark brown, the hair is usually straight and brown to black in colour and the cephalic index is 72-77.

The Bengal delta in the eastern part of the plains is distinguished by a combination of Aryan, Dravidian, and Mongoloid peoples, a combination (except for Assam) not found elsewhere in India. They are differentiated from the up-country peoples by a relative 'lack of hair on the face, the yellowish tinge of complexion and the flatter face'.[11] These traits are quite pronounced in West Bengal, but have been greatly modified in the eastern part of the Delta where conversion to Islam permitted the peoples to intermarry with Afghans and other Muslims from northwestern India (i.e. Irano-Afghan Mediterraneans).

Although India contains a large number of distinct racial groups, race as such did not play an important part in Indian politics. On the other hand, wherever a racial group predominated in a sufficiently large area and was further distinguished by either religion or language and felt itself to be the victim of economic, political, or cultural discrimination by other stronger groups, it expressed itself through organized political protest.

The Grierson Survey, carried out over a period of twenty-five years and later incorporated in the Indian Census of 1931, lists 179 languages, sub-divided into 544 dialects (some spoken only by a few) which are to be found in the sub-continent. Nehru, in his well-known book '<u>The Unity of India</u>', stated that 'India is a Bable of tongues with hundreds and hundreds of languages -- every one who looks around him can see that India has singularly few languages, considering its vast size'.[12] Nevertheless, language differences have played and are still playing an important part in dividing the peoples of the country. In fact, it is not the 'hundreds of languages' but the few large ones which by their strength are able to exercise a divisive influence. Depending upon their origin, Indian languages can be divided into three main groups, those of Dravidian origin, now almost entirely in the Deccan, those of Aryan origin, predominant in the Ganga basin and central India, and those of Semitic and Iranian origin, found in the Indus basin.

Religion has been the most important of the cultural forces in India. This is, firstly, because India has been a land of many religions, both of local and of foreign origin, secondly, because here religions are more than mere forms of worship -- they are total attitudes to life.

Religion lent itself even more readily than language to exploitation for purposes of political power, and produced what is known generally as communalism.

Summarizing the role and political significance of the cultural forces mentioned above, one is inclined to agree with this conclusion of Spear: 'Though India has been the seat of a single culture, however diversely expressed, this culture has neither expressed itself in a number of independent states as in Europe,[13] nor as a single stable cultural empire as in China'.[14] 'It never organized as a whole from within as China has. Often the differences between the different cultural groups were so strong that even successful attempts at cultural compromise and synthesis proved in the end to be separatist and exclusivist. A good example is that of Sikhism which started out as an attempt at compromising the Hindu and Muslim ways of life, but in the long run itself became rigid and exclusive. Whenever the dreams of the idealists and the architects of synthesis were put to the test, especially the political test, the whole blue print of unity faded. This was because, like Europe, India evolved a plural society divided within itself.

* * *

There are obvious physical, economic, cultural and social diversities which create cleavages and conflicts in the country. There are also marked regional imbalances which have to be overcome as far as possible. Gandhian philosophy is too idealistic to provide a practical answer. The present policies do not seem to be quite in keeping with socialism. Finally, the need of a strong centre seems to be the means if not the end in solving the problems of diversities and imbalances.

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8. In the strict sense, Dravidian and Aryan are terms denoting language groups has made it possible for many authorities to use them as terms denoting racial affinities as well. They were used in this manner first by H.H. Risley who carried out the first detailed official survey of races in India, which was reproduced as Volume I of the Census of India, 1901. The map of races in that volume is still the basis for all subsequent racial maps used by authorities who have only substituted Risley's terms by newer and more scientific ones; the distribution remains basically unchanged.

9. Buxton, L., op. cit., p.127.

10. Buxton, L., op. cit., p.126.

11. Buxton, L., op. cit., p.127.

12. Nehru, J.L., The Unity of India, p.141.

13. This part of the statement has lost much of its force now that India has split up into three parts, forming two separate states of Pakistan and Bangladesh.

14. Spear, T.G.P., India Pakistan and the West, p.38.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

An attempt has been made in the previous pages to set forth the geographical facts which underlie the political situation obtaining in the India of today. Understandably this work has got involved in many social facts which in most cases have geographical under-pinnings. It was necessary to form a somewhat coherent picture even though the details of the picture may have been wearisome. It must be admitted, however, that the vastness of the country and the complexity of the problems do not lend themselves to simple generalizations.

It would be a wasteful exercise to recapitulate what has been said in the preceding chapters. It would be useful, however, to present in bold strokes the salient features of the foregoing study.

That the Republic of India represents the major part of the huge sub-continent which had had a long and chequered history dating back, as far as we know to the Indus Valley Civilization. The country had had advanced political and social institutions suited to their times. What is, at any rate, important to remember is that almost

throughout its history it was rarely a single entity. It was the British colonial rule which imposed, largely in its own interest, a political unity which had rarely been there before. The country has therefore inherited a socio-politico-economic legacy of benefits and problems not only from the two centuries of British Raj but also important institutions and their influences from the ancient and medieval periods of its history. While some legacies of the past may be a boon, some others may be a curse. Institutional reforms are therefore an imperative of modernization. And the post-indepence India does stand in need of many institutional reforms.[1]

In our discussion of the physical set up, we have emphasized and re-emphasized the enormous regional diversities in the environment in respect of all the important factors of physical geography -- which in most cases has created an intricate mosaic of economic, cultural, social and political life.

One does not have to be a Marx or a Keynes to understand that politics is a hand-maid of economics -- and many a times its governess. We have therefore included in this work a chapter on Economy as a montage of the present day economic sectors, situations and processes.

The basic problem of the present India is the problem of a huge and relentlessly increasing human population -- "a return of Malthus", if the expression could be forgiven. This work has therefore taken into the growth rate, the trend and the composition of the population as well as the social conflicts and cleavages on such grounds as language, religion, caste, and regional and tribal loyalties.

The geopolitical problems of India are not only numerous but also often very intricate. The problems may be divided in three well known categories, namely, internal, peripharal (relating to boundaries) and external. It is not a neat division anyway for the three catogries impinge on each other. It will be noticed that in the present work we have made only passing references to India's external problems such as its stance of non-alignment in respect of super-powers' rivalries, panch sheel (peaceful co-existence), the objective of making the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace and so on. Also, we have touched only slightly the peripheral problems such as the border disputes with some of the neighbouring countries. We have focused more attention on the internal problems of the country.

And it is because internal problems have been our major concern in this study, we have chosen to survey only two of the several fields. The first is the Union-State relationship and the second is political parties and electoral behaviour. This choice of fields is not at random but has been made for the purpose of guaging, as far as possible, the political stability of the country. The geographical factors which make or mar political stability have to be inevitably taken into account, which we have done in the immediately preceeding chapter.

Let us now see the extent of success in the application of the three precepts which had mentioned in the Introduction.

1. GANDHISM

It is essential to understand that Gandhiji was a humanist and his stress was always on the intrinsic values of life. He deplored the crass materialism of technology and industrialisation. His charkha (spinning wheel) was a symbol of his stance towards rural problems. His concept of 'Panchayat Raj' was a symbol of the co-operative life of an ancient agrarian civilization. His fervent desire to uplift the Harijans in order to create an egalitarian society was aimed at social justice. His

philosophy of non-violence was based on his desire to remove conflict between fellowmen, social groups and nations. In short, according to him righteousness in human relationship should primarily be sought not in economics, politics and law but in morality and religion.

Humanism and morality shall always have a role to play in society. The great teachers of mankind, including Gandhi, shall always serve as beacons of men of all climes. Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence has been the basis of India's approach in international relations. His efforts to arouse the consciousness of the Indian people against the centuries of tyranny of the scheduled castes and other weaker sections of the society have not been wholly in vain. However, many of his concepts, especially those emanating from his simplistic approach to economic problems are unpractical in modern times. In the India that has emerged in the last three decades the concept of "small is beautiful" can only be disastrous if applied to agriculture, industry and other sectors of economy. Even the Gandhian concept of grass-root democracy (Panchayat Raj), a seed which has fallen on hard ground. In course of time the ground may soften.

2. SOCIALISM

The precept of Socialism (a word which means different things to different people) is, in the final

analysis, an attempt to achieve a high degree of social justice. The seeds of this attempt had been sown from the very first day of the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly. The debate was whether social justice should have precedence over economic growth or should it be the other way round. Nehru then moved the well known "Objectives Resolution" which after a prolonged debate and the consideration of about 2,500 amendments finally took the shape of the "Directives Principles of the Constitution". The memorable words which Nehru uttered during the debate and which remain basic to this day were as follows:

> The first task of the Assembly is to free India through a new Constitution, to feed the starving people and clothe the naked masses, and then to give every Indian fullest opportunity to develop himself according to his capacity.

It took the ruling party to convert the aim of establishing "a socialistic pattern of society" into "a socialist society". The realization of this aim is still a long way off. Despite the fact that India has done a great deal in the various sectors to bring the "commanding heights of the economy" into the private sector, there is not much to show as far as the level of poverty is concerned. This is certainly due to the fact that the

growing population which has doubled itself in the last three decades makes a mockery of all the real economic growth. Besides the enormous growth of population there is the factor that the country is, in Gunar Myrdal's phrase, a "soft" country, for it has attempted to "manage" all interest groups with as much "tact" as possible. The price naturally has to be paid. This "softness" is one of the major reasons why social justice is slow in coming not only in India but in all developing countries.

3. CENTRE- STATES RELATIONSHIP

The third precept which we may call centrality of administration has been on the anvil ever since the days of the Constituent Assembly. Now, thirty / five years after freedom from foreign rule, it is not the fact of freedom that is brought into question. It is the constitutional framework, the role and the limits of the various institutions created by the constitution and the real meaning and relevance of the different socialistic ideals set by it that continues to generate a good deal of debate. More than the debate, it is the actual performance of these institutions that will determine the shape of things to come.

One such institution is the Central Government itself and then there are State Governments. It is said

that India's Constitution is unitary in character and federal in spirit. Such a statement is hard to analyse for it cannot be both fish and fowl. It should be remembered that India's Constitution, the longest written Constitution in the world, provides for a new kind of mix-up in which the Centre is more powerful. The founding fathers of the Constitution with the bitter ghastly consequences of the partitioning of the sub-continent still fresh in their memory and with the full realization that the post-Independence India was the home of many cultures, religions, languages and also had a vertical division of society and regional imbalances, envisaged that the country, if it is not to fall apart, must have a strong central government. In the last three decades divisive tensions seem to have increased and while there is an argument for granting more autonomy to the States, it should be remembered that state autonomy is different from Balkanization.

* * *

And this brings us to our final conclusion, which is this:

The new India, a country only three decades old is still in the nation-building stage. This pronouncement

may shock the nationalists and more so the chauvinists but it is historically and scientifically true, nevertheless. Let us see how.

Nationalism is a recent phenomenon, no older than the middle eighteenth century. In the preceding centuries no society was held together by the ties of nationalism and no state was organized on nationalist foundations. The societies were bound by sentiments of kinship, tribal descent, feudal loyalty, religion and language. The medieval states were dynastic oligarchies, feudal monarchies, in which the common people had no part.

The modern nation state became a concept and a reality only after the Industrial Revolution. Moreover, throughout the world national consciousness has been a product of evolution and in this evolutionary process education and persuasion (and sometimes even coercion) have been the methods by which national unity and identity have been achieved. This can be seen in the history of almost all European modern nation states. India, having chosen a path of democracy, can only depend upon the method of education and persuasion and if, on the one hand, it makes the task of nation - building difficult, on the other hand, the positive results obtained are more lasting.

India has not done too badly in negotiating the three impediments to nation-building -- namely, regional autonomy, religions plurality, and linguistic diversity. It may appear, however, that a good deal has yet to be achieved in all these three respects. The diversities which are there should make the country richer and stronger only if bigotry and chauvinism are banished. The main problem today is to exorcise the demon of suspicion, jealousy and fear from the minds of the people. History has given the country a phenomenally rich cultural heritage; geography furnishes it with immense valuable resources of men and material; it is now left to politics to shape India's destiny.

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